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765 of the man's personal basket. A piece of a spear that has been broken
628 off and left in the body of the victim is also used as a relic. When a man has been wounded he sometimes soaks pieces of paper bark in his blood and presents them to his relatives to be used as reminders of their duty to compensate him for his injury by helping him kill or wound a member of the offending man's clan. When a man obtains one of the relics, it is an almost absolute demand on him to kill a member of the slayer's group. This is particularly true if it is given to a young man. The older men usually give their relics to the younger males.

765 The spirit of the dead is supposed to go with the relic, and the relic
778 has magic power. It can be thrown into an intended victim's fire and
789 cause him to go to sleep, or the possessor can blow his breath against it and produce the same effect. It is often carried in the mouth during a battle to make an opponent tired and heavy-footed and to prevent him from dodging spears. Relics play a prominent part in all feuds.

682 Occasionally men are killed within the clan, but this is not a cause for war or retaliation by members of the clan or by near relatives from without the clan. A man may be such a notorious killer and cause so much trouble for his own clansmen that the entire group will kill him to stop further disturbances. At times men are slain by their own
688 clan for breaking ceremonial taboos, such as divulging secrets of the old men to the women or the uninitiated, and for viewing ceremonial objects before their initiation.

672 If a fight is on and a near relative is accidentally hit by a club or
576 spear, the person responsible hits himself on the head while saying he is sorry. Here, too, the underlying idea is to inflict an injury on the responsible person similar to the one the injured party suffered.

152 Military honor also contributes its share to the causes for war. A man
517 will brave the spears of a whole clan to demonstrate his fearlessness. The writer has seen two brothers defy fifteen men in a spear fight. The Murngin people are a brave and courageous group. Fear of death
[626] while in a fight is seldom seen. A man who shows an unwillingness to fight is called a woman and held in extreme contempt.

628 The fundamental principle underlying all the causes of Murngin
681 warfare is that of reciprocity: if a harm has been done to an individual
181 or a group, it is felt by the injured people that they must repay the ones who have harmed them by an injury that at least equals the one they have suffered. When the total cultural situation of Murngin life is
181 further examined, this negative reciprocation is found to fit into a

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(pidgin English word describing the instigator) is a social personality most prominent in the narrup warfare. When young men kill, everyone speculates on who did the "pushing," for it is always assumed that an old man is really responsible. Although not always true, it is a rule of pragmatic value for a clan to follow when meting out vengeance. Waltjimi, in the feud that is described in this chapter, is a good example of the "pusher" type of war personality, just as the old Darlwongo men are later the causes of the continuation of the feud when they "push" Natjimbui.

Maringo

The maringo (death adder) obtains its name both because of the snake-like formation of the attackers that surround the camp of the enemy and because of its deadliness. Killings or severe wounds always result.

When a maringo expedition to avenge the slaying of a clan's relative is decided upon, the following magical procedure is gone through before the warriors leave camp. Relics of the dead man are always carried by some of the relatives. The oldest man who holds one of these relics goes out into the bush some little distance from the camp and makes a fire and hut for himself. He draws the likeness of a man on the earth or molds it on the ground with his hands, giving it the name of the killer.

He then instructs a young man to go into the main camp and tell the old men, who organize themselves and go out in a body. They stop some little distance from where the old man and the image are camped. The leader sends two men ahead as spies. They pretend to look for the camp of the image, which represents their enemy's camp, and to discover if the "killer" is there.

Everyone in the group is as stealthily quiet as if he were on an actual expedition. The two young men sneak around the camp of the image. They return and announce that there is no one there and they could not find the "killer."

They sit down and say nothing. The others also remain quiet, unless they express regret that "he" has escaped and it is of no use to continue the expedition.

The two young men eat; when they have finished they pick up some pieces of white clay or other paint material and throw them into the ring of men. Everyone knows then that the image, the killer in this magical ritual, is there. The two leaders of the expedition divide

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their men into two groups; one side goes to the left of the camp of the image and the other to the right. They form a circle of spearmen about the camp. When the advancing leaders have met and the camp is completely surrounded, they ask if the "killer" is there, and use his name; and then, with shouts and cries, the expedition rushes in and throws its spears into the body of the image.

The above follows very closely the usual maringo fight of the blacks. If the expedition is successful the killer's body takes the place of the image, and possibly several of his relatives are also slain.

After the spears have been thrown into the image, the owner of the relic kneels on both knees beside it. He puts a piece of fire that has been taken from the camp fire into the image. He places his basket before his mouth; in the basket he has the relic, wrapped up in fiber string or paper bark, so that no profane eye can see it. He addresses the relic as follows: "Where is the killer?" There is no answer. He then starts naming the various possible places where the slayer could be found and asks the relic, which has the spirit of the dead man, where the enemy is. The naming of place is continued until a kind of click is heard. This is supposed to come from the bone and is in answer to the question.

The owner of the relic says, "Ah, that is the place." He once more addresses the relic: "You are not lying to me? You are telling me the truth?" The click is heard again. Next day the avenging expedition sets out and goes to the place designated to kill the slayer of their relative. It is thought that such an expedition must be successful after the ritual has been performed.

The best description of a maringo can be found in the following myth from the Durili people of Cape Grey, which tells of a night attack made by the snakes against a certain clan. It conforms to the accounts of the modern maringo fighting and in addition gives the idealized form according to the best native standards.

"The people were catching fish in the creek. They had caught a lot of fish with a line [for hooks the Murngin used nails from planks that were brought in on the tide]. While some of the men were catching fish others were busy making a fire. They burned the bones and scales in the fire. An eastern wind came up.

"A small blue-tongued lizard [Dua moiety] who was in the nearby bush smelt the fish bones cooking. 'Ah,' he said, 'they are cooking fish; I shall go.'

"He came close; he ate the bones and scales. The men got up. 'What is this?' they said. They had never seen a blue-tongued lizard before, for

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are only two recorded cases in the last twenty years, one between the peoples of the Caledon Bay area and those of Buckingham Bay; the other between the peoples west of the Goyder River and along the seacoast and those east of the Goyder and in the interior. The gaingar represents a regional fight involving a large number of clans rather than the usual type in which only a few clans participate. 726

The writer recorded fifteen deaths in the Caledon Bay fight, and fourteen killed and one severely wounded in the Goyder River combat. Such casualty lists show clearly that the sparse population of the Murngin and the surrounding tribes cannot afford such a military luxury except at very rare intervals.

The fight is held between the members of several clans and is the result of regional antagonisms. It may be within the tribe or intertribal. It always follows a long-protracted series of killings in which each side is stimulated to an almost hysterical pitch. When one group of clans finally decides to invite its enemies for a gaingar, the people always say that this is a spear fight to end spear fights, so that from that time on there will be peace for all the clans and tribes. It is sincerely believed at the time that this is an effort to stop clan feuds.[3]

The ideal gaingar takes place in the following way: The challengers make two small spears of a special type. They are wrapped with ceremonial feathered string; two pendants of the same material and tipped with feathers hang from each. One spear has short arms and the other much longer ones. The first symbolizes the Dua moiety, the second the Yiritja. The arms are also symbolic of the men killed by each side before the challenge is sent. Dua men are put in a Dua spear, and the Yiritja are supposed to be placed in the weapon of their moiety. Although the arms may sometimes symbolize only one man, more frequently it is a whole group. 726 189

After the spears are completed they are hidden until the following day. In the morning two young men take them and run up and down in front of the warriors while the latter throw their spears at the ceremonial ones. Should one of the spears be hit, it is believed that the war party will be defeated and some of their own men killed. If they are not struck no one of their side will be killed and the expedition will be a success.

In the afternoon the two spears are placed in the ground at a throw-

[3] Talk of this kind, however, has such a familiar ring to a European of this generation that one can only smile at the seeming incongruity of a Stone Age man mouthing the meaty phrases of our twentieth-century peacemakers.

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ing distance, and once more spears are thrown at them, but this time there is an effort made actually to strike them, since now they represent the enemies, whereas in the morning they represented the challenging clan. The spears are then sent by messenger to the enemy. They are a ceremonial invitation for battle. The enemy goes through the same ceremony if it decides to accept. The two parties then meet halfway between their respective territories.

Short spears are used in the gaingar because they can be thrown from any position and are difficult to parry or avoid. The two lines of warriors stand about fifty feet apart. Leadership is almost completely absent after the fight starts. Trickery is used if possible. In the gaingar that was held in the Goyder River district, the sea people who challenged the men from the interior hid part of their forces on each side of the plain in a mangrove jungle. They placed a small party down at the forward end of the plain for the advancing people to see. As the enemy advanced this small group retreated to the jungle growth at the far end. They thus enticed their antagonists into the avenue of hidden warriors. The sea people then surrounded those from the interior and killed a large number.

Makarata

The makarata is a ceremonial peacemaking fight. It is a kind of general duel and partial ordeal which allows the aggrieved parties to vent their feelings by throwing spears at their enemies or by seeing the latter's blood run in expiation.

Frequently the makarata does not follow the ideal pattern; instead of providing a peacemaking mechanism, it produces only another battle in the interminable blood feud of the clans.

When sufficient time has elapsed after an injury or death of a member for the clan's emotions to calm, the men send a message to their enemies saying they are ready for a makarata. The other side usually agrees to enter into this peacemaking ceremony, although there is always suspicion of treachery. The injured group always sends the invitation, and the other must wait for them to decide when they wish to have it. Frequently makarata are held after some of the totemic ceremonies have taken place, since it is at this time that most of the clans will be present. When the warriors of the injured clan or clans arrive on the dueling ground they are covered with white clay. They dance in, singing a song which is descriptive of the water of their totemic well. The other side has also painted itself. The two sides stand a little

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628 Darlwongo country and found the Marderpa man who, many years ago, had cut Danginbir's head off (see page 178).

628 688 Two Darlwongo men approached Natjimbui and told him that this Marderpa man chased them with spears while they were preparing to make their honeybee totem. This is a great crime among the Murngin and a deliberate insult to the totem of the clan. Because of this they were forced to take the string from off the emblem and put it back in their baskets, since the emblem would have lost its efficacy had they continued making it after this occurrence.

Natjimbui the next morning went to look for food. He was followed again by the two Darlwongo old men. When they had penetrated into a nearby jungle for some distance they came upon Natjimbui digging yams. Once more they said to him, "That Marderpa man chased us with spears while we were making our totem. Don't you feel sorry for your [778 611] mother?" (Their totemic emblem was called mother by Natjimbui because his mother was the nearest relative through whom he could trace his relationship to it.)

628 "Yes, I will do it. I do not forget my mother. I will do it tonight."

When night came the married men of the camp gave food to the single men. Everyone sat down at dusk and sang and talked. The Marderpa man was suspicious and did not trust the Darlwongo clansmen. He said out loud, for all the camp to hear, "I am all the same as a kangaroo. I sit up all night and watch."

Natjimbui sat down in the main camp. He did not sleep; he too watched. Hours went by. He grew tired of waiting and reached in his basket and took out the bone of the dead man. He unwrapped the paper bark from the relic and cut the bone in half. He wrapped one half and placed it once more in his basket. He held the other in his hand. He was far enough away from the Marderpa and other members of the camp so that no one could see what he was doing.

628 789 Natjimbui arose and walked over and sat down at the fire beside the Marderpa man. He started talking to him. While they talked he threw small stones into the fire, then he pretended to pick up a stone to throw, but instead of the stone he threw the bone into the fire. He was sure then that the Marderpa would soon be sleeping, since this was done to make the spirit come out of the bone and act upon the Marderpa in such a way that he would be easy to kill. By and by the Marderpa boy said, "I am very sleepy. I think I will go to sleep." They both lay down. Natjimbui continued talking. He asked questions, after some little time, to see if anyone would answer him. No one did. They were all asleep. He stealthily rubbed his spear with the other part of the relic to make it go straight and kill quickly, for he knew that the spirit would guide his spear. He hooked up his spear and pointed at the Marderpa, but too many 628 small boys were sleeping around the man. He took his leg and pushed

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756 784 came along and hit our small one. I fell in the ocean and I was covered with the salt water. I heard those opossum children make noises. I put my hand on my head and they fell down inside the water when I came up. A little after that an old man was sick. 'I am sick inside here,' he said. [He touched his chest.] I looked to see what was inside him but I could see nothing now. My eye was too dark. I had lost my doctor children. I can't see anything now inside people. Everyone says that I have lost my very good thing that I had. It's too bad. I said to all the people then, 'I can't look out for you people any more. I fell down in the salt water and it covered me and I can't cure any more.' If I had fallen down in fresh water it would not have hurt those doctor children of mine."

752 755 *Diagnosing Snake Bite.*—Sometimes it is impossible for a man to determine what has stung or bitten him when he is walking barelegged through the high grass. The Murngin feel it is always necessary to know what has caused a thing. Magicians are called in to diagnose, of which there are at least two methods. In the southern and more interior clan territories, among such people as the Ritarngo, Djimba, Gunalbingu and Dai, when a man thinks he has been bitten by a snake that has crawled away without his seeing it, he finds a hollow pandanus log. He then takes some blood from the wound, places it on a handful of grass, and sticks the grass in one end of the old pandanus tree. He lights the dry grass, blows on the smoke, and watches to see it come out the other side. The snake spirit comes out of the hole. If it looks around for food the man who is bitten will die. If it hurries away he is certain to live. By the other method of diagnosing a snake bite the magician rubs the injured part with one hand while with the other he holds a long thin grass stalk. The grass stalk is moved around the ground with great delicacy and is raised and lowered a number of times. In time some little particle of earth, a grass seed or a bit of bark, will adhere to the end of the stick. If it is only a grass seed or some tiny minute particle the magician diagnoses the bite as that of a small snake. If it is large, the snake is a large one. This diagnosis is also supposed to cure the injury.

789 *Rain Magic.*—It is not necessary to be a magician in order to make rain. Anyone can do it, providing he follows the correct procedure. No one would attempt to make rain during the dry season, since this is an improper time for it and nobody wants it then. However, if the dry season continues too long a number of people, usually ceremonial leaders of the various clans, attempt to end it. To make rain, a man gathers a large bundle of green grass and fashions a human image of

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it, then digs a hole, puts in the image, and buries it. It is left there and starts to swell up. As soon as it does so noticeably, the rain starts. 789

Another method is to take a pile of dangi bark (used for poisoning fish) and beat it thoroughly with a stone. Large armfuls of green grass are then gathered, the dangi is placed inside of the grass, and all of it tied in a bundle. Stones are then placed on top of the grass, and the bundle is carried out into the sea or fresh water to the height of a man's shoulders and dropped. The man then comes up out of the water and sings the sound of rain falling and pushes the water with his hand, which causes it to splash as though rain were falling in it. He says, "In three days there will be clouds and in four days there will be rain." [278]

The bundle can also be made into a human image, which can be and usually is given the name of the maker.

If one wants the rain to cease, the grass is taken out and thrown about so that it will dry, and the rain then stops. If it continues to such an extent that a huge flood sweeps down from the bush country a very powerful medicine man may dive into the flood water, catch the offending sacred python who is causing the flood, and send him back into his water house, which causes the waters to recede. A few years ago a tremendous flood came down the Buckingham River and went higher and higher until the people climbed the highest trees with their babies and dogs. The flood came still higher and faster, and finally it knocked some of the children, dogs, and babies, and a few of the older people into the water and drowned them. Warlumbopo, the Rirango medicine man, with the help of his familiars, dived in the water and caught Muit, the totemic python, pulled him back, and sent him down into the well again. The rain stopped and the flood ceased. Only medicine men understand how to do this. [821]

Murngin believe they cannot stop rain if it comes by itself. Sometimes they think that it has been caused by people in other countries performing the magic. Nothing can be done about it unless the people themselves take the proper methods to stop the magic from working.

THE MURNGIN PHARMACOPOEIA

The Murngin do not depend entirely upon magic for curing their illnesses. They have a fairly extensive pharmacopoeia which includes both animal and plant remedies. Each illness has a special treatment applied to it. If a sick man has been treated with herbs he can also 278 757

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we circumcised those young men. That blood made her sick." One old man spoke up and said, "That blood made her sick. It makes women ill when they touch us after the Djungguan. It is the spirit in that blood that does this. It is the totem, not the wooden emblem, but the spirit inside with the power name. He is in that blood. A woman cannot touch it or it will make her sick." 753 826 784

Smaller rituals are performed by two or three individuals to cure someone who is ailing. Frequently women rub red ocher over their bodies because of an ailment, this being but an abbreviation of its use in the larger ceremonies. Red ocher string is tied around the head or body to cure a headache or abdominal pain. This act, too, is but a shortening of the ritual in which decorated string is placed around the head or body in the larger ceremonies. 755

Larger rituals are definitely used to remove pain. Certain parts of the Djungguan are designed to take away the pain from the boy who is being circumcised. The women relatives whip themselves in order to transfer the pain from the boy to themselves. The head of the boy's penis, they also say, is a turtle's head, so the cutting of the foreskin cannot hurt him since it is not his flesh being cut but that of the animal. These statements are also supposed to remove the pain from the boy. 785 826 831

Other rituals, which assure success in war, are demonstrably only elaborated magical practices. The gaingar spears represent the head of the Dua and Yiritja moieties. The souls of the dead of the moieties are supposed to be in each weapon. The ceremonial throwing of the spears to assure the killing of an enemy and to prevent the killing of their own men is definitely of a magical nature, the power of these ceremonies depending upon the souls' clustering around the spear just as the power of the magical killing stick depends upon the souls which cluster about its point. 778 789 775

The bone magic ceremony used in the maringo fighting (see Chapter VI, Warfare) is also an elaborate ceremony focused upon the magical idea of the soul's being associated with a bone relic. In earlier parts of this chapter the individual treats the bone in a ceremonial way to practice his magic against his enemies. Both the gaingar and the maringo ceremony from one point of view are elaborate magical practices participated in by the group and led by the ceremonial or war leader.

All the rituals, particularly the Narra, which celebrates the ascendancy of the clan totem, are commonly used to purify the group of 751 783

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blood, the heart's blood of a man or woman killed by magic, a hair belt from the head of a dead man, a gondjurma or killing stick used to puncture the heart of a sorcerer's victim, the body of a dead man, a burial platform where a body formerly lay but which has since been removed, the warro or soul which goes to the totemic well, and the mokoi or trickster soul. All of these items have a common element, namely, they are associated with the dead. Each one is directly and primarily related to some aspect of death. The dead, too, are looked upon as "inside," particularly because very shortly after death the sacred totemic emblem is placed upon the body of the dead. Women can no longer look at the corpse, which is immediately wrapped with paper bark and completely covered, exactly like a totemic object. The paper bark is now "outside" and something that the women can look at, while the dead, with the sacred emblem upon it, is now "inside" and dal. The dead belong to the world of the sacred (see mourning rites), and these objects, by their primary association with the dead, partake of this power.

Dal Magicians' Paraphernalia, and Relics.—A third category of dal objects—the paraphernalia of the magician and relics used by the ordinary man to give him extra-mundane aid in his hunting or fishing—are actually only a subdivision of the preceding category, since the power of magicians and the power of relics find their source in the sacredness of the dead.

The heart's blood of a man whose soul has been stolen by a magician is saved, and it often turns up in the hands of a magician or an ordinary layman in the form of a kind of resin, which is supposed to be the hardened blood. This can be used in fighting to give a little extra power, and in hunting or fishing it is used the same way as the shavings of a killing stick, to be described presently. Sometimes the heart's blood is placed inside the white magician's spirit bag to give it extra power. This blood gains extra mana by passing through the possession of a number of people and usually is traded in from more remote regions in the south.

When the body of a man killed by magic or in a spear fight is disinterred and the flesh removed from the bones, the finger bones are often distributed as relics among the clansmen and near relatives. These relics are wrapped in string and placed carefully in the possessor's dilly bag as reminders of the crime they feel has been committed. This is also true of pieces of the spear which remain in the body, and of pieces of bark or wood which the dying man may soak in his blood

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and present to his relatives as reminders. The power which these relics possess is due to the soul of the dead following the bones. The soul is a true or totem-well warro. It listens from the totem well and comes when it is needed for an avenging expedition or to help its possessor in time of trouble. Any account of a clan feud is always filled with the use of these relics. Usually, when a maringo expedition is starting, a magical ceremony is gone through by the avenging group in which the bone of the dead plays the central rôle and decidedly helps to a successful conclusion. The gondjurma or killing stick used by the black magician to puncture the heart of his victim has great power, first, because it is associated with the dead body, second, because it is believed that the souls of the victims cluster about the point, and third, because it gains power by passing through the hands of a great number of men as it is traded from clan to clan and from tribe to tribe. The soul which adheres to this magic is also the Wongar one. It is like a friend to its possessor and he is its master. All of these souls are in or on the stick and can be called for help in hunting or fishing. They will also come to a man when he dreams. They will help foretell the future for him. If he is to be ill, he will feel something pricking him like the end of the stick. If good things are going to happen, one of the souls will come and tell him. If a stick is supposed to have killed a large number of men, all of the souls are supposed to be with it, but actually they are looked upon as one, and it is not so much an individual soul as a kind of diffused power or mana. A killing stick can be in the possession of a magician, or he can give it to an ordinary man who is one of his friends. Such a stick is always kept wrapped in paper bark and covered just as though it were a totemic emblem or ceremonial object and must not be subjected to the profane sight of women or the uninitiated.

When a man wishes to obtain its power to help him in hunting he scrapes off pieces, chews them and swallows them the night before the hunt. Immediately afterwards he shuts his eyes, says nothing, and goes to bed. Next morning he utters not a sound and goes out with his spears looking for game or for fish. "Those souls which the stick killed before this have gone into the water or out into the bush and they have stopped the fish and game so that they can be found. When the man arrives he sees a few. He spits in the water (he is fishing) and a lot of fish come there. He spears one fish and when he spears the one all the rest go dead as if you had poison in the water."

If he were hunting kangaroo it would be impossible for him to miss,

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of the ceremony and says that he has cut ranga wood and wants to make the totemic emblem. If the time is proper the leader says, "Yes, we will go look at that log to see if it is the right size [for carving]." The old man, with other old men, goes out from the main camp to the totem grounds to see how large the ranga wood is. If it is a big log he says, "I think we'll make a woman ranga." If it is somewhat smaller he says, "I think iguana would be the thing to make." Other young men sometimes say at this time to the leader, "I would like to make a girl ranga." Another one says, "I should like to make a fish ranga," another, "I should like to make a wan-du-ma [mud fish]," and still others say, "We want to make a marn-bur [clitoris]."

The young men who are talking to the old leader are his yukiyuko, gatu, younger bapa, marelker, gurrong, mari, and kutara. The old man says to them, "When this Narra ceremony is finished you can sell the string from these rangas to your relatives, but you must come first and see me and make me a present. You can sell it to the Yiritja, you can sell it to people in the same camp. You can take out the string with parrot feathers on it and make bangles and streamers to hang down from your arms. That makes the arm strong when warding off spears. It will help break the spears." The various totemic emblems are usually made at this time.

2. Late in the afternoon the leader and the initiated men leave the main camp and go out to the men's ceremonial grounds. A small quadrangular dance place has been prepared. This ground is made and used in the same way in the Narra ceremony of the other moiety. The leader takes his singing sticks, the men form themselves into a chorus in front of him. They sing "Um-um-um-wa!" which is to symbolize the running of the fresh water from a totem well located in the interior, and they dance back and forth across the dance ground. When the dancers turn at the end of the ground, they repeat the cry again and the tempo of the rhythm increases, which means that the water is running fast. After this dance has been repeated a great number of times, the leader, followed by his chorus, dances into the main camp. They walk about the place and call out the power names of rain and flood water and the springs that appear after the floods. Finally the leader says, "We will stop." The women give them food and they return to the Narra totemic grounds for further dancing. When they get on the dance ground they cry "Um-um-sis-sis-sis-wa!"

All the power names of water are now called up.

This finishes the dance for the evening. Some of the men return to

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moments, there is little organization of the people to give general community expression. A kind of disorganization has occurred. The women wail, but it is not the organized wailing which one finds in some of the rituals. There is a hesitancy and uncertainty about the actions of the people. The more intense latent antagonisms rise to the surface and some of the relatives may be blamed for the death. For example, when a child dies it is often thought that the father and mother have had sexual intercourse during the later months of pregnancy, which are supposed to be a period of abstinence. The other relatives of the dead child express their antagonism by picking up their spears and attempting to throw them at the offending pair. In one sense this is an organized expression, since they well know that they will be prevented by other relatives from throwing the spears.

After the first wailing at the news of the spearing or sudden death of a member of the clan or of a near relative, a stillness comes over the camp which is very noticeable to anyone accustomed to the general noisiness of all the Murngin camps after dark when the people have eaten. It is at this quiet time that the people express their desires for revenge. A near relative throws a spear on the ground and lets everyone know that he is going to avenge the death, whether it has been caused by the spear of a known enemy or the black magic of an unknown antagonist.

The female relatives of the dead man cut their heads with stone knives or spears or sharp pointed sticks to show their great sorrow. The mothers, sisters, wives, and female maris are the relatives who show the greatest amount of grief and cut themselves the most. A few hours after the death of a man or woman the relatives belonging to his clan, led by the father if he is alive, paint the design of his clan well upon him. For example, if he were a Warumeri or Wangurri clansman he would have the duck well painted upon him. The painting and design are exactly the same as those placed on the body of a young boy when he is being circumcised, and on the body of an adolescent boy after he has seen his totemic emblem. Red ocher is painted all over the body first and then the totemic design is painted on the chest and abdomen and face. The hair is covered with white clay after most of it has been cut off or plucked out to be made into a sacred hair belt. "We pull out the hair of the dead man a few hours after he dies and put red ocher on his head after we do this. We make a hair belt from his hair and look for red parrot feathers to put on it.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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764 765 789 Any relative can make a hair belt for the dead man but the dead man's brother gives that belt to their kutara or mari. Sometimes the brother keeps it. That belt is very good in a fight. It makes you very strong. If you wear that one in a fight you can throw a spear that will go straight and kill that man you throw it at. This belt is good for ceremonies."

764 775 The painting, according to native thought, is so done that the old ancestors can see which totem well the dead man belonged to and carry the soul immediately to its proper resting place. The old dead marikmo is supposed to announce loudly, "Oh, that is my young maraitcha." The evil mokois say, "No, this one belongs to us. We are going to take him." They argue about it, but the design upon the dead man definitely places him in the hands of his proper ancestors who prevent him from getting into the clutches of the evil mokois and take him back to his totem well.

[768] When a man dies his relatives move their camp some little distance away from the grave. Some of them call out, usually the mother, "If you want to see us you can come back now. Don't come back by and by." She is talking to the mokoi spirit rather than the warro spirit (soul) of the man. (See footnote, page 413.) When the mokoi spirit leaves the dead all the mokois of the many men who have died before make noises in the jungle. These evil spirits are calling out to this newly released spirit of the dead man. They make sounds as if they were coughing, for this is the way that mokois talk. They are saying, "Where is our son and our grandson?" The leader of the mourning ceremony calls out when these sounds are heard and the mokoi spirit of the dead man is supposed to come away from his body. The people carry fire sticks and go out to the jungle. There are two lines of them; they join in the center of the dance area, and the spirit is supposed to be in the sac-like space between them. The leader takes a fire stick from a man. He puts the fire stick against his chest and no one can see what he is doing. He runs and shows the fire. This is supposed to drive the spirit into the jungle and to finish his life with the living. It is thought by some that this is for the good soul and by other informants that this is for the bad soul, "and by some it is not believed at all." "We did that for Narnarngo's wife when she died. Marupila and I carried fire and we did not see that spirit. We said to ourselves, 'That whole thing is a lie. You can't see a mokoi that way.' Another time when I wanted to see a mokoi with my own eyes I tried at Elcho

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

YIRITJA SNAKE (BUR-O-O-LO)

This Wongar snake lives out on an island in Buckingham Bay in the ranga well there. The female lays her eggs in an ant bed. The eggs hatch and the young ones come back to the ranga well. This Wongar snake is different from all the rest because he lives just like any ordinary snake. If you go there you can see him in the island bush. 713X 825

Two men who are alive at the present time and are somewhere around forty years of age took a canoe and went there a few years ago and discovered several of these eggs lying in an ant bed. They cooked and ate them. That snake knew it immediately and went high into the sky. A small black cloud formed. It grew larger and the sun and the whole heavens were covered and Yiritja lightning came out of the clouds and licked at them like a snake's tongue. Heavy thunder and lightning knocked down the bark houses they had built.

No one can kill this Yiritja snake there because it would make so much rain that it would kill all men and the water would come up from the sea and cover the world. This snake lives among the water lilies. He has a black mark down his back. He kills kangaroos by wrapping himself around them. There are just two Wongar snakes there, a female and a male. No black man will kill those snakes. Any other kind is all right. Sometimes women kill the children of these snakes. They sneak up and do it because they don't understand the proper way to act. They cook and eat them and in a little while we understand because the rain and thunder and lightning come hard. When we men know this we call out, "Who has done this thing to us?" 713X 825 821

We keep asking and asking and finally some woman says, "I have killed him." 713X 825

We then gather singing sticks and sing very fast: 821 789

"Dur-ung-dun [thunder, Yiritja]
Mar-li-ar-ri-un [thunder, Yiritja]
Main-muk-dir [good lightning]
Kai-mer-a-na [snake]
Nar-lin-nar-lo [snake]
Bur-lo-o-lo [snake]
Kai-mer-a-na [snake]."

This is repeated a number of times. It is sung this way to stop the rain. This snake hears this and he stops. He understands we are calling out to him and he stops that rain. We black men are afraid that that snake will swallow us again because when it rains more and more that Yiritja snake might swallow us just like that Dua one did a long time ago. A few seasons ago we had a rain like that. It rained day and night for several weeks. We were all very afraid. We sang this way.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

The Man, Waikinbu, at Cape Shield

*773 *532 [821] At Cape Shield, during mythical times, a *jiritja* man, *Waikinbu*, speared two large fish in a nearby lagoon. He cooked them, had a very large meal, then lay down in the shade of the trees to sleep off the effects, leaving the fish beside the camp-fire. But he slept so long that the fish, becoming fly-blown and putrid, created such a stench that heavy thunder-clouds formed over the top of them.[89]

The long ellipse, Pl. 94B, is the lagoon at Cape Shield in which *Waikinbu*, lower right, speared the two fish. The design across the centre of the ellipse is the camp-fire where *Waikinbu* cooked his catch, and at *a* is the tree under which he went to sleep. The short strokes on the periphery of the ellipse represent the maggots from the decaying fish travelling away from it in long lines. At *b* and *c* are the tracks of the *gunjun* crabs leaving their holes to eat the fish. When *Waikinbu* woke and looked up into the sky he saw that three thunderstorms, *d, d, d,* had formed in the sky over the putrid fish. The boomerang shapes indicate small stratus clouds which form underneath the thunderstorms.

The central ellipse of the painting is now an extensive lagoon and the tracks of the maggots and of the crabs are lines of sand-hills close to the shore.

The Rain-makers, Wuluwait and Bunbulama

*773 ● 989 *532 When the mythical people *Wuluwait*, the man, and *Bunbulama*, the woman, wanted rain they tied bundles of water-grass together and soaked them in the swamp. The aborigines still follow a similar practice. After the bundles have been in the water for a day or more, clouds begin to form. In a short time the rain not only falls but continues to do so as long as the rain-making bundles are left in the swamp.

The figures in Pl. 94C are the rain-makers, *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*,[90] with the magic bundles in their hands. Above them is a rainbow, with the rain, vertical cross-hatched panels, falling from it. The black space between the rain symbols is a gap in the storm. The hair radiating from the heads of the rain-makers is also associated with rain, one informant stating that, instead of hair, the water-grass used to make up the rain-making bundles grew from the heads of the mythical people. On the bottom edge of the painting, reading from the left, the first two cone-like figures are rocks and the last three, termite mounds associated with the totem place of the rain-makers. The vertical lines on the sides represent falling rain. Rain is also pouring from the two rain-making bundles.

The Man, Nalili, at Caledon Bay

*773 *532 262 The mythical *jiritja* man, *Nalili*, lived on the sea coast and beside the swamps at Caledon Bay, collecting as food shell-fish, crabs and oysters from among the mangroves, and fruit, yams and animals from the forest and swamps at the rear.

89. There is a *duo* myth of the thunder-man *Tjambural* in which the stench of rotting fish caused thunderstorms and rain (Pl. 89D).

90. See carved wooden figure of woman, *Bunbulama*, Pl. 133A, B, and bark figures of *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*, Fig. 65c, D; also colour plate facing p. 267.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

+773 *532 radiating lines round the head indicate a ceremonial head-dress the men are wearing.

Plate 107C deals with the totemic place of the *Baijini* at Port Bradshaw. In panel *a* are lines of clouds, triangular patterns, and between them the two totemic wells, dark circles, in which the *Baijini* ancestors now live. The aborigines can drink the water. The footmarks indicate the *Baijini* coming to and from the well.[76] In the upper part of the panel, *b*, is a Malay type of anchor used by the *Baijini*, and below, a wet-season cloud, with fish on either side.

In panel *c* the two rectangles on the left side are totemic rocks under the water. The upper central figure is a turtle and the lower central figure, a frog, *ganakman*, standing on a rock. On the right are two webs of night spiders which have luminous eyes. The rectangles in *d* represent two rocks under the water, besides which a dugong is feeding on the sea-grass, *gumala*, indicated by the parallel lines at the head of the creature.

Two women, *Mai-auwa*, panel *e*, are standing on a large rock on shore, crying for the wet-season rains to stop.[77] The parallel lines from the bottom of the clouds in panel *b* (above the two women) symbolize the north-westerly, *bara* (wet-season) rains pouring from the cloud. In panel *f* the rectangles are areas of land associated with the *Baijini* ancestors. There are cloud symbols on the left and *Baijini* footmarks on the right.

Plate 107D again refers to the *Baijini*, this time in a creation myth.

Gurumuluna, the head man of the *Baijini*, and his sister camped at a waterhole, Boumala, on the southern side of Port Bradshaw. After a while, transforming themselves into flying foxes, the brother and sister flew to Dulmumnia, on the western shore of the port, where they changed themselvs back into human beings and copulated. Both their footprints and the marks of the woman's buttocks can be seen on the rocks at Dulmumnia. Later, as flying foxes, they flew to Melville Bay, where again, transforming themselves into human beings, they lived as man and wife. The cross-hatched triangles are clouds, *binjalo*,[78] which are seen at the beginning of the wet season. In the centre is *Gurumuluna* and his sister *Baijini* and between them the waterhole, Boumala. The footmarks were made by the brother and sister when they visited the waterhole.

Plate 108A pictures *Gurumuluna* and an unidentified *Baijini* companion. The lines from their heads are ceremonial decorations, and the triangular symbols encircling the figures, wet-weather clouds, *binjalo*.

Plate 108B pictures three *Baijini* men who came to Port Bradshaw in a boat and built a house for themselves. Reading from the left, their names are *Gurumuluna*, the head man, *Womatjuri* and *Daiubuni*. On the left of *Gurumuluna* is

[78] 121

76. Possibly the waterhole, Boumala, Pl. 107D.

77. The aboriginal women wail in unison to stop the wet season wind, *bara*, and to start the *timara* wind as did the mythical woman *Muralunangau* of Bremer Island. Pl. 136B, D: myth, p. 133.

78. These triangular cloud symbols, probably a *mata* design, are particularly common in the *pintya* art of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, but absent elsewhere. The same symbol is present in the Celebes (Sanders, 1911, Figs. 139 9) and may be the source of this *pintya* symbol.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oll7 Muragin Oll7

that they can help the spirits of the newly dead on their journey to Nalkuma, *Wulu-wulu* giving them the bean of the *menin* tree,[90] a passport into the *jiritja* heaven, and *Kultana* assisting to paddle them across the sea to their future home.[91]

The Mokoi and the Turtle Hunt

Plate 110E is the story of a turtle hunt by some of the *Mokoi* who had paddled in a wooden canoe from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem, and the incidents connected with the hunt.

The three *Mokoi* paddled through rough water (four cross-hatched rectangles, *a*, on left of right-hand panel) to reach a group of rocks (squares with diagonal lines at *b*) so that they could spear the turtles living among those rocks. On their way the spirit-men saw a devil-ray, *b* (*Daemonata alfredi*).[92] The large gills are shown as slits, and the fat within the body as a crescent. In the left panel are dugongs, *merinjunga*, feeding on the submarine grass, *gumata*. The fish are *tinimbu*, queen fish, and squares with diagonal lines, rocks in the sea frequented by the turtles, upper edge.

The Mokoi and the Dugong, Merinjunga

Two mythical dugongs, *merinjunga* (*Dugong australis*), which once lived in the sea at Cape Arnhem were continuously being pursued by the *Mokoi* who came from the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. The *Mokoi*, however, were not always successful because, just as they were about to spear the creatures, a storm would develop and allow the dugongs to escape.[93] Later the canoe was transformed into a large rock on the sea coast between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, and the dugongs into a rock in the water near by. The place of the stingray, which also appears in the painting, is a hole in the ground. When travelling in their canoes the aborigines will not go near the totemic place of the dugong, for if they did the dugongs would send up so much smoke and fire that they would be destroyed.

On the land, near this totemic place, is a paper-bark tree, once a dugong, which resembles that creature in appearance, and near by is a termite mound also a transformed dugong. When the aborigines wish to increase the supply of dugongs at a particular locality they take a branch from the dugong tree and a piece of earth from the termite mound and throw them both into the fire. When the wood is burnt to ash the men take the heated termite earth from the fire, pound it into dust, mix it with the wood ash and throw the mixture into the sea where the dugongs feed. This dust from the totemic tree and the termite mound will create many dugongs in that locality.[94]

90. Pl. 100C. 91. Myth, p. 331.

92. This huge, cumbersome but harmless sea-creature sometimes reaches a length of fifteen feet and a weight of a ton.

93. Dugongs can only be captured on windless days when the sea is calm.

94. This increase ritual is not unlike that carried out at the increase centre for parrot-fish at Winchelsea Island, p. 84.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OE17 Muragin OE17

another yam, *banumin*. But each woman became so engrossed in her own dance that she forgot about the other, and travelled in a different direction from that of her companion. *Bunbulama* finished her dance at Melville Bay where, in company with her husband, *Wuluwait*,[58] they now entertain the spirits of *dua* dead whilst they are on their way to Purelka.[59] *Muralunangau*, on the other hand, danced her way to Bremer Island. But when *Muralunangau* was making camp she noticed the flowers with which she had decorated herself had all wilted. She became so sad and wept so violently that the sound of her grief caused the *timaru* wind to blow.[60]

At the present time, when the rainy season is nearing its end the women in the camp wail in unison, believing that the sound of their grief, like that of *Muralunangau*, will cause the wet-season wind, *barn*, to stop and the *timaru* wind to blow.[61]

The white cap on the head of *Muralunangau*, Pl. 136B, b, indicates the paint used when she decorated herself in readiness for her dance with *Bunbulama*. The yellow face on Pl. 136D is symbolic of the colour of the totemic clay-pan of the woman at Bremer Island. The black rectangle at *a*, Pl. 136B, is *Muralunangau's* carrying-bag. The cross-hatched panels on *Muralunangau's* body indicate falling rain.[62]

The Winds of Yirrkalla. *Barn* is a north-westerly *dua* wind which continues throughout the rainy season, extending from November to March. This is a time of scarcity for the aborigines, because the continuous rains, high humidity and heavy storms not only spoil most of the food, but prevent fishing.

Timaru, another *dua* wind, blows from the east-south-east and immediately succeeds the *barn*. The plants start to bear fruit and the underground tubers to mature during the period of this wind. The mythical woman, *Muralunangau*, of Bremer Island was responsible for the first *timaru* wind.[63] As mentioned previously, the aboriginal women endeavour to start the *timaru* wind by means of concerted wailing.

The *jiritja* wind, *lunguruma*, which blows from a northerly direction, is sent to the aborigines of Yirrkalla by the spirits of the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. *Lunguruma* brings many coco-nuts, lengths of bamboo and sometimes even Melanesian canoes;[64] all of these are looked upon by the Yirrkalla aborigines as gifts from the spirits of Nalkuma.[65] Food is plentiful during the period of this wind.

58. See myth associated with bark figure of *Bunbulama*, Pl. 65A, b.
59. See myth, journey of *dua* dead, p. 325. 60. See details of Groote Eylandt winds, p. 91.
61. The *timaru* is the wind following the wet season, a time of scarcity. It ushers in a period when the fruits start to ripen and the underground tubers mature.
62. As there is no mention of rain in the myth of *Muralunangau* it is not clear why these designs are painted on her body.
63. See myth of woman, *Muralunangau*, p. 433. 64. See carved pipe, p. 388.
65. Berndt (1948), p. 91, mentions that 'at the time of the north-east winds [no doubt *lunguruma*], just after the wet monsoonal season, coco-nuts, canes, long poles, bread fruit and timber, with an occasional canoe (including some of the outrigger variety) are washed up on the mainland beaches and are said to have been sent by the spirits that inhabit Rudu.' Berndt's Rudu is my Nalkuma.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Muregin O117

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

A. FIGURES MOULDED IN WAX

(1) Human Figures

Among the wax figures collected at Yirrkalla was one of the boomerang-man, *Oijal*, and one of his wife, *Neri-neri*. McConnel[91] records a waxen human figure used in the increase ceremonies of Cape York, and Elkin and the Berndts[92] several at Yirrkalla which, they claim, were used in imitative love magic and to cause the death of an enemy. 237 532* [171] [789]

Plate 104E is *Oijal* with boomerang-shaped designs painted on both the front and the back of the figure. Around his neck the lines of dots have the same meaning as in the bark painting, Pl. 29A, i.e. body decorations. Pl. 104F is *Neri-neri*, whose body is also decorated with lines of paint.

(2) Creatures

The aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land are expert in the modelling of small animal and human figures, called *kumou korngi*, from the wax of the wild bees. This wax, much more plastic than that of the European bee, is warmed slightly over the fire and moulded into shape by the fingers. When the craftsman is satisfied with his modelling, he paints the figures with designs. These sometimes indicate the moiety and *mata* (language group) of the totemic creature. McCarthy[93] figures a kangaroo, a turtle and a crocodile from a Yirrkalla collection presented to the Australian Museum by Rev. F. W. Chaseling. [616]

Plate 143: A is the *dua* emu, *marlaweai*. B is the green turtle, *gariwa*. The totemic place of this *dua* creature is on the sea floor between Yirrkalla and Bremer Island.[94] C is the *jiritja* night-bird, *barawak*, which was associated with the opossum, *marungo*, at Cape Shield.[95] D is the queen fish, *tinimbu*, belonging to the *jiritja* myths of Cape Arnhem.[96] E is the bandicoot, *wawut-kura*, whose nest was destroyed by a bush-fire. The *gumaitj mata* design for fire is painted on the side of its body.[97] F is a fresh-water fish, *paipinga*, which the mythical man *Laitjun* used to catch in his fish trap at the mouth of the Koolatong River.[98] G is the dugong, *balweakmeri*. This creature is one of the main foods of the inhabitants of the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuna.[99] H is the *dua* kangaroo, *kayitjambal*. 532* 616 773*

B. CREATURES CARVED IN WOOD

The aborigines of Yirrkalla, and to a lesser extent those of Groote Eylandt, carve simple wooden figures of various creatures. The fact that in the collection of the South Australian Museum there are examples of similar wooden figures from Melville, Goulburn and Elcho Islands suggests that this craft is carried out over most, if not all, of Arnhem Land. 532* 171

91. McConnel (1935), Pl. XVII, Fig. F.
92. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 104, p. 108.
93. McCarthy (1938), Fig. 40.
94. Painted coffin, Pl. 102C, D.
95. Carved message stick, Fig. 65A, B.
96. Bark painting, Pl. 110B.
97. Bark painting, Pl. 110B.
98. Bark painting, Pl. 110A.
99. Engraved pipe, Fig. 60D.

murdered turtle man, *Madapang*, is now a large rock on the mainland opposite Bremer Island.

Plate 144G, H shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle.

The upper panel on the reverse side, G, is occupied by the *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*, and the lower by a similar but larger turtle, *madapang*. The latter is the turtle who, when a man, was killed by the *Mokoi* at Melville Bay. The short transverse panels of cross-hatching near the head and tail of the turtle, *madapang*, indicate seaweed, the food of the creature, and the long panels on either side, the sea.

In the upper panel of the obverse side, H, are five dolphins, called *injipana*, and in the lower, five dolphins of a different species, called *bulanbir*. The cross-hatched panels indicate smooth sea water at the totemic place.

The panels at the head of the upper turtle indicate where the reptile dug in the sand to lay its eggs; the long panels on either side represent sea-water. The rounded end of the paddle indicates that it belongs to a man of the *dua* moiety.[20]

(2) Painted Paddles and Spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt

On Pl. 145 are four paddles from Groote Eylandt, A, B, C, D and E.

No interpretations were gathered of the various designs painted on the paddles. In the upper panel of Pl. 145A is the figure of a man associated with what appears to be a wind symbol,[21] on Pl. 145D a dugong and a turtle, and on Pl. 145E another dugong. Collected by F. D. McCarthy.

On Pl. 146 are four spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt, A, B and C, D and E, and F. Although, as with the paddles, no interpretations were gathered, it is possible to distinguish a dolphin on D, and a turtle and possibly a bandicoot on E. Collected by F. M. Setzler.

(3) The Log Gongs

Two log gongs were collected in Arnhem Land, one (Pl. 147A, C) called *mur*, by F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy, whilst engaged on archaeological research at Milingimbi, and one (Pl. 147D) called *ubara*, by myself, at Oenpelli.

Warner, when carrying out research among the aborigines of Milingimbi during 1927-8, saw the log gong in use and gives a full description of its function.[22] According to him, the gong, which is beaten with a frayed section of pandanus root, is used only in the *ulmark* cycle of ceremonies. When the women hear the sound of the gong, which they believe is the voice of the serpent *muit*,[23] they assemble in the camp and continuously repeat the call, *kait-ba*. This call protects the women from harm, it being the same as that used by the

20. For shape of a *jiritja* paddle, Fig. 58A, B.
21. Bark painting of south-east wind, Pl. 241D.
22. Warner (1937), pp. 315-16.
23. Another name for *julungur*, the mythical serpent, who swallowed the *Wawalak* sisters (*see* myth, p. 278, and Warner (1937), p. 372).

[text continues on p. 456]

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Muragin OII7

Wawalak sisters in their attempt to drive the serpent, *jurlungur*, or *muit*, back into the Mirrirmina waterhole (myth, p. 279).

THE MILINGIMBI LOG GONG

This incomplete myth, associated with the Milingimbi gong, *wur* (Pl. 147A, C), and the designs painted on it, deals with a man, *Julpaipai*, his wife, *Gutjabaui*, and their daughter.

During creation times, *Julpaipai* and his wife travelled from Nilipidji (the famous aboriginal flint quarry, the source of the best flint knives) to the country belonging to the Lingalomunira (Warner's Liaalaomir) clan on the Goyder River, where they created a sacred waterhole, Miaramina (Warner's Mirrirmina). Whilst camped beside this waterhole *Gutjabaui* gave birth to a daughter. Later *Julpaipai* sent his wife to Miaramina to collect food, and whilst there she was raped by a mythical rock python that lived in the waterhole.[24] As *Julpaipai* was making a fire to cook the food collected by his wife, he saw a dog chase a goanna up a tree used only in the women's ceremonies. Later, the goanna was followed by many spiders and a rat.

The central figure of Pl. 147A, C, is the man, *Julpaipai*, carrying a feather plume in his left hand. The lines radiating from his head indicate his hair. To the left of his head is a boomerang.[25] To the left of *Julpaipai* is his daughter, wearing a feather plume on her head and carrying another in her hand. To the left of her again is a wooden spear, resting on a boomerang. The animal near by is the rat, *marawata*, which the dog chased up the sacred tree, *warguritja*, shown immediately above. On the extreme left of the design is a digging stick belonging to *Julpaipai's* daughter.

Reading from the right of the central figure, the small beetle-like designs are the spiders, *dipala*, which followed the rat and the goanna up the tree. Near the right hand of the mythical man is his spear-thrower and two wooden spears. The figure to the extreme right is the woman, *Gutjabaui*, holding a spear-thrower in one hand a digging stick in the other. The design to the left of her head is a yam she has dug out of the ground.[26] Associated with the log is a ceremonial object, Pl. 147B, perhaps a beater, its painted designs symbolizing green ants, *tapalang*, and their nest. Myth and interpretation by F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy.

THE LOG GONG, UBARA, OENPELLI

The log gong, Pl. 147D, was used in the *ubarn* ceremonies[1] witnessed during our stay at Oenpelli. According to my informants, the designs had no specific

24. This myth has many points of resemblance with that of the *Wawalak* sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 270). Both the clan and the sacred well have similar names, and the woman, *Gutjabaui*, gave birth to a child near the sacred well. Later the woman was raped, instead of being swallowed, by a mythical rock python which lived in the sacred well of Miaramina.

25. Although boomerangs are not made by the men of Arnhem Land, they reach Milingimbi from the south through the medium of a remarkable trade cycle. This trade cycle is described by Thomson (1939).

26. Warner (1937), p. 313, mentions that the log gong is 'painted with snake figures, emus and other animals as well as plants'.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

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drowned. The elder brother kept swimming until he reached a low rock near the shore of the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. But his limbs were so stiff and he was so exhausted by his long swim that he could not reach the shore. Later, their bodies were found on a pebbly beach at the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. When the ants saw what had happened they travelled in long lines to the bodies and bit them all over, hoping to bring them to life,[18] but were unsuccessful. The record of this mishap, which formed the basis for two aboriginal bark paintings, can be seen in and around the Milky Way.

Plate 157C deals with the terrestrial story of the two brothers, and 157A with the celestial.

In Pl. 157C the two brothers, in their canoe, are shown in the upper left-hand panel, with the rock cod they captured immediately below them. At *a* is the elder brother, *Nungumiri*; at *b*, the younger brother, *jikaeana*; and panel *c*, the pebbly beach on which the dead men were found. The central panel, *d*, represents the watercourse at Blue Mud Bay, now the Milky Way. The parallel and the wavy lines, *e*, indicate the wake of the fish, and *f*, that of the canoe. The parallel transverse lines to the right of the elder brother, *a*, and to the left of the younger, *b*, are the ants travelling to the dead bodies to try and bring them to life. Other vertical lines of black and white dots are ants travelling to the right armpit of the younger brother, *b*, and the left hand of the elder, *a*, respectively. The younger brother is wearing the arm-bands which caused his death.

The two brothers, the fish and the canoe are dark starless spaces in the Milky Way, in the region of Scorpio. The wake of the fish, the canoe, the pebbly beach and the ants are either small stars or nebulae in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Plate 157A, the celestial story, shows the brothers in the sky, the younger on the left. The rock on which the elder brother landed is the black mark immediately below him. The central panel tells the story of the tragic canoe journey. To the left are the brothers in the canoe, and in the centre the swamped canoe with the brothers struggling in the water. The men and the canoe have all become celestial features. The two men are dark patches in the Milky Way, the younger within the constellation of Serpens, the elder near Sagittarius. The rock on which the elder brother landed is a portion of the Milky Way, near Theta Serpens, and the canoe, a line of four small stars near Antares. The meandering lines which form the upper and lower panels, representing the wake of the fish and the canoe, are luminous portions of the Milky Way, near Scorpio, while the stars in the central panel are either included in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Orion and the Pleiades

At Yirrkalla, the constellation of Orion is believed to be a canoe full of *jiritja* men, called the *Tjirilpan*, with their wives, the Pleiades, in another canoe.

[789 825]

18. The bites of ants are often used by the aboriginal magicians to restore their victims to life. See Warner (1937), p. 204.

796 [775] it went to his Dreaming or spirit home to wait for the return of the animating spirit after the death and final burial of the individual.

Further, because of the original life-giving power of the "Mother", [789] the ritual which included many dances referring to natural species, was believed to ensure the normal cycle of the seasons. This, however, did not occur directly as though the effect of increase rites, for the ritual was not regarded as such; but just as, and while, men per- [774] formed their ritual in the "Mother Place" to ensure their own births and rebirths, so the "shades" of natural species performed their own increase rites in the spirit-world.

[77] The details on which this brief analysis was based suggested that the Kunapipi ritual as described by Professor Warner as part of the Wawilak cycle and as having come from the south through the Rainbarngo (Rembaranga) tribe (p. 452), was a most important cultural element in Arnhem Land, the "pure" form of which must be sought along the line of the "southern" rivers such as the Roper, Katherine and Victoria.

177 In 1946, I worked for a short period amongst the tribes on the Roper and Katherine and also visited north-east Arnhem Land, and 773 in 1947 and 1948 worked amongst the Mangarai and Alawa on the 796 Roper, and the Djauan and southern Rembaranga in southern [114] Arnhem Land. While at Yirrkalla near Cape Arnhem in the north-east corner of the region I saw the ceremonial ground with the Nanggoru and Kanala where a Kunapipi ritual had been held some weeks earlier, and obtained information which showed that it had there coalesced with the Wauwalak (or Wawilak) myth, the very "hut", in which the two sisters and the baby were swallowed by *Muit* (Yurlunggur or Julunggul) the snake, being an important feature in the ritual. Moreover, the tradition, as given to me, was that Moit, that is the Wauwalak ritual, spreading south was met somewhere about the Rose River –Nungubuyu tribal country –by the Kunapipi ritual. For the people there, being afraid of his swallowing habits, killed him, and made their own *mumuna*, Mother Dreaming. The result is the present Kunapipi, with the Yermalindji—the Mother's yam stick, and at the same time the Rainbow Snake's symbol—and the Anggoru, the Mother's earth womb.

[114] It was quite clear then that by 1946 the Kunapipi ritual had reached Arnhem Bay, and had done so since early 1929, for Professor Warner wrote (p. 452) that it was not found in any of the clans around Arnhem and Buckingham Bays, or on the islands of the north-east though large numbers of the men from these districts went south to take part in ritual with the clans of the same general linguistic group who did possess it. Further, I was told in 1946 at Elcho Island that a local man, Kumu, had brought the Kunapipi in about 1929 to Elcho and other islands from Caledon Bay where he saw it.

773 Yeramalindji (Yalmanindji), a blackened mass, still in its original shape, lying in the Nanggoru.

796 One special feature of this "Mother Place" was that on each of the 171 walls of both the Kanalina (the oval billabong) and the Nanggoru (the semi-circular trench or "river"), the rainbow serpent, here [532] called Muit, was engraved. Apart from what informants said, there [346] was no mistaking the drawing. The walls were of hard clay and about 2 feet and a little more in depth.

Finally, the "Mother" ritual has spread north from the Lower Victoria River as far as Port Keats, where in 1944 the elders were assimilating the doctrine of the "Old Woman" (exoterically), but the desirable mother (esoterically), and the bullroarer with snake symbolism.*

The Appeal of the Kunapipi

A cult which spreads throughout a vast region as indicated in the 771 above outline, and spreads irresistibly, must satisfy a spiritual or 796 psychological need and make a captivating appeal. There is no mistaking the grip which the doctrine of the "Mother" and the Snake has on the initiated, or their fervour and faith. But, why does the cult appeal and grip in this way?

Let us outline its significant features. It highlights the maternal, nourishing, reproductive, and indeed creative, principle in nature and man, though not denying the male principle. That is, it associates the cycle of the tropical seasons, and the increase of human beings and of natural species with the concept of Mother—of birth from the womb. [831] Further, it correlates this with sexual activity in which the male or inseminating principle is involved. In the former aspect, we have the Mother, symbolized by the ceremonial "Mother Place", and in particular by the earth womb, the *nanggoru*, for, indeed, she is the earth. In the latter case we see the symbolism of the Great Snake: the Rainbow Snake, and the Yermalindji.

Further, in the ritual, the male actors simulate sex intercourse, 796 which symbolizes both the impregnation or else the quickening of 786 the Mother herself, and also the intercourse of the animals represented in the rite. It is done for her and through her for them and all nature. Finally, the actual sexual intercourse between the actors and selected women near the ceremonial ground, as part of the total ritual, not only witnesses to the indispensable rôle of women in reproduction, but also makes the "Mother's" life-producing principle or power operative. Just as in arid Australia, the actors cause blood from their arm vein or genital organ to flow on to the symbolic representation of the totem or totemic ancestor, giving it or [789] him power to increase its kind; so too in Arnhem Land the actors'

* Mr. F. Parkes, a member of the Air Force, gained the confidence of these men, and recorded all he could.

sexual intercourse with the obvious representatives of the "Mother" enable her to fulfil her important function.

Thus, here as in the Ancient East, ritual sex-intercourse is a sacramental act in the cult of the "Great Mother", on which her potency and the survival of man and nature depend. In both regions we are in the presence of a "Mystery Religion". The precious guarded secret is only revealed to the initiated, the twice born, and that secret, that "mystery", is the continuity of life. Life, however, is no mere visible or external phenomenon. In all its forms it has a spiritual counterpart, its "shade". The Cult Mother is more than the Big Woman of the mythological period; she is eternal in the earth, and present and active in her "shade" form in every Kunapipi. The Great Snake, too, Muit or Yermalindji, is present in his symbols at the ceremony, teaching the "reborn" through the traditional words and ritual behaviour of the elders, speaking through them even as the prophet and teacher is the voice of his God. The ritual or "wood" shade, the spirit double of the initiand enters the bullroarer symbol of the Mother and with it remains in her "earth womb" until it goes to the spirit home. While the actors perform their rites to ensure the birth and rebirth of mankind and the "increase" of the Great Mother and the Great Snake as manifested in the rains and the consequent fertility of the earth, the spirit-womb of the Mother is made potent; in addition, as they represent in mime the behaviour of animals, reptiles, birds and insects, the "shades" of these creatures perform the increase ceremonies of their own kind in their own ritual places in the spirit-sphere. Finally, the women who have co-operated in the Kunapipi with their "outside" calls, responses, songs and dance (like the Bundami or Awalambi), and who then take part in the ritual intercourse with men from the Mother Place, become bearers of the latters' ritual or Kunapipi "shades"; at least, such is the doctrine in the Roper River region.

So life is assured to man and nature for it is eternal in the spirit world, in the Great Mother who brings forth and whose impregnating symbol is the Great Snake, the iridescent rainbow which never fails to join the sky to the earth.

Such is the appeal of the cult. Its function in the social and economic life of a food-gathering people in a tropical environment can be studied, and indeed is obvious and logical. A most valuable attempt to analyse the North-East Arnhem Land cults from this point of view has already been made by Professor W. L. Warner in *A Black Civilization*. But why should such a Fertility Goddess cult arise in Arnhem Land and the Victoria River region, and not also in the northern part of the Kimberley Division or in Cape York Peninsula, where the tropical seasons and conditions of living for a parasitic food-gathering people are similar? The answer probably lies in the differences in external contacts. Here it is sufficient to say

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Arnhem Land, social organization: the division of society into two groups (that is, moieties) was, with the kinship structure, the traditional norm. But within recent years the sub-section system has been introduced from the south and south-west, coming up the coast through Rose River and Blue Mud Bay. In the Milingimbi region it seems to have been introduced at an earlier date, through contact with the inland tribes, particularly the Reinbaranga. At Yirrkalla, however, the sub-sections are not yet completely co-ordinated with the kinship terminology, and among the older people are not in constant use. Certain sub-section terms are however mentioned from time to time in this work, in reference to Ancestral Beings; they will not be discussed in this context, and reference should be made to the work of L. Warner, T. T. Webb, A. P. Elkin and R. Berndt.[3]

c The Religious Quality of Yirrkalla Social Life:

Yirrkalla society, like most other Australian Aboriginal communities, whether of desert, hill or coast, must forage for its food, the abundance of which depends on the particular environment. On the north coast and rivers of Arnhem Land, food of many varieties is available in great quantities. In spite of this, however, its constant supply is said to depend on the rhythm of the seasons, upon the mythical characters of the Eternal Dreaming Period, and on the performance of associated ritual and ceremony. In order to ensure a constant supply of food, in the form of natural species generally, these aborigines rely on the great ceremonial cycles of *djunggawon*, *kunapipi*, *ngu:rlmak*, and the *dua* and *jiritja nara* cycles which are usual in this region. These rituals, associated with the principal Ancestral Beings such as Djanggawul, Wauwalak, Laintjung, Banaitja and Baijini, are the basis of indigenous religion. But they are not concerned merely with the provision of food. Their purpose is, primarily, to ensure the continuation of the human species; the increase of all other animals, birds, fish, vegetable matter, and so on, is only an adjunct to the main theme.

This religion then is a dominant quality in Yirrkalla life, and is reflected in all its institutions and conventional forms of behaviour. It concerns itself with the fructification of all living things, and in that category human beings themselves are considered the most important. As, however, the Kunapipi cult is especially concerned with their rhythmic sequence of birth and rebirth, it is crystallized in a definite concept of a Fertility Mother. Moreover, the cult is concerned with the coming and going of the seasons, the appearance and disappearance of vegetable and plant matter, and the propaga-

3. *Vide* L. Warner, *op. cit.* 1937, pp. 116–124, and his Morphology and Functions of the Australian Murngin Type of Kinship, *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 33, 2, 184; T. T. Webb, *op. cit.* pp. 406–408; A. P. Elkin, *op. cit.* pp. 412–416; R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land*, Chap. 1.

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tion of other natural species—all phenomena which are necessary for the continuance and well-being of the people themselves. In keeping with this doctrine, a natural development has been the stress on procreation—the importance of pregnancy and child-birth, and the essential sequence of sexual intercourse and conception, expressed particularly in ritual and long song cycles.

In order to understand Kunapipi cult life and belief, it is necessary to summarize very briefly some of the other cults which flourish beside it in this area.

The Djanggawul myth, consisting of several hundreds of lengthy songs, relates the adventures of two men and two women, who in the Dreaming Period landed at Port Bradshaw, on the north-east Arnhem Land coast. They had journeyed across the sea from an island called Bralku, now known as the *dua* home of the dead, somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt. These Ancestral Beings are known generally as the Djanggawul, but had their own personal names. The leader was Djanggawul himself; the two women were his sisters, the younger Maralaitj, and the older Pildjiwuraroiju; and their companion was Bralbral, who plays only a minor part in this great cycle. In their canoe they brought a large conical *ngainmara* mat, which is now used particularly by the women, and also certain sacred *rangga* sticks possessing life-giving qualities. The mat symbolized the uterus; the *rangga* sticks were penes, and when not being used ritually, were kept hidden in the *ngainmara*.

As the Djanggawul journeyed along the coast, they met other Ancestral Beings like Laintjung and the Baijini, and Spirits such as Pomapoma, Kultana, Woijal, Burulu-burulu and others; but none of these had the procreating powers of the great Djanggawul. Djanggawul had an elongated penis; and his two sisters had long clitori which dragged on the ground as they walked. Djanggawul had sexual relations with his sisters, so that they were continually pregnant. From time to time, at the camps where they stayed, he would lift their clitori to one side, and put his hand up into the uteri to remove many children of both sexes: these were the ancestors of the present aborigines. The song cycle features the perpetual pregnancy of the two sisters, their uteri being likened to the *ngainmara* mats which they brought with them, while the people who are removed from them in childbirth are the *rangga*. It is said that a person's bones are like *rangga*, inherited from both the father and mother, who in turn inherited theirs through the generations of ancestors, right back to the Eternal Times of Djanggawul and the creative heroes. Therefore, at death, a person's material remains, as well as his spiritual substance, must be treated with respect, and surrounded by ritual.

An important aspect of this myth, second only to the theme of fertility, concerns the institution of sacred ritual. In the beginning,

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773 796 so it relates, the Djanggawul sisters themselves were the sole guardians of the religious objects and associated ceremonies. They were well acquainted with all the sacred ritual and doctrine, because this intimately concerned them; the symbols they used, and their actions in dancing, made reference to the sexual act, to pregnancy and birth. Aboriginal men to-day speak definitely on this point: "Then we had nothing: no sacred objects, no sacred ceremonies, the women had everything." So one day, the myth continues, the men stole the women's objects while they were out collecting mussels; they took them back to their own camp, and there performed the special sacred dancing. The Djanggawul sisters, coming back with their shellfish, found that their *rangga* had disappeared. They heard, in the distance, the singing of the men; and finally they decided that perhaps it was just as well that the men had taken their *rangga*. It would save them a lot of trouble, they agreed; now the men could carry out most of the ritual for them, while they busied themselves chiefly with raising families and collecting food. In this way, their true function as Fertility Mothers became established. Such an attitude is not confined to north-eastern Arnhem Land, but appears in the mythology [171] of other Australian Aboriginal tribes. However, women still play [562] an important part in sacred ritual, for instance in the Kunapipi.

616 796 This is a brief summary of the complete version, which gives in detail the main theology of the *dua* moiety. To both *dua* and *jiritja* men and women it is of major importance, for men of both moieties take part in the *dua nara* ceremonies, although *dua* men alone are the leaders, singers and principal dancers. The Djanggawul ritual is concerned with "higher" religious thought, and most of it with sacred dancing on a sacred ground where a *nara* "shade" or hut has been constructed. This hut represents the womb; in it the *rangga* are stored, and from it men emerge, to posture and dance ritually while holding them.

616 773 If the Djanggawul are important to the *dua*, Laintjung and his son Banaitja are equally so to the *jiritja* group of clans who hold the *jiritja nara* ceremonies. The Male Ancestral Beings Laintjung and Banaitja, with certain female counterparts, dominate *jiritja* religious ideology; but their mythology is not nearly so vivid as that of the Djanggawul, nor are their ceremonies so important. Laintjung came from the sea near Blue Mud Bay, and established his cult. There, and at nearby places, he distributed sacred totemic designs to *jiritja* clans; he had also brought with him sacred *rangga*, the *jiritja* "high" totems, which he gave into the custody of the clans. Although much [198] of the Laintjung ritual also relates to the increase of the natural species, most is only indirectly related to fertility.

When his father died, Banaitja desired to broaden and put into practice some of Laintjung's religious concepts; but his efforts aroused general antagonism, and at last he was put to death. Later,

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773 796 to these aborigines, is not just passive reliance on the Ancestral Beings, an inertia based on the hope that "something is bound to turn up" if they wait long enough. They must do their part to ensure the action of the Ancestral Beings; and their part is the ritual re-enactment of the relevant myth. This releases the "power" (or *dal*) inherent in the Ancestral Beings. This *dal* then finds full expression, and fertility is assured.

Thus the myth is thought to express the intentions of the Ancestral Beings, who possess the power to carry them out; and this power is released (or brought to bear) by sacred ritual. It arranges the seasons, maintains an adequate supply of food, and ensures the continuance of the group as a whole. [805] [789]

Before we proceed with the Kunapipi ritual, it is necessary to relate the final part of the Wauwalak myth, explaining the way in which this ritual was obtained and handed down from *wonga:r* times.

The three rituals, of which only one is to be treated here, are grouped together in terms of kinship ties. The *djunggawon*, an age-grading ceremony, is called *katu*, son, and so is its principal ritual object, the long *julunggul* wooden "trumpet". The *ngu:rlmak*, mainly religious in character and open only to adult postulants, is termed *ba:pa*, father, and so is its ceremonial hollow log *uwar* "drum". The *kunapipi* is *mari* (mother's mother's brother), like its main ritual emblem, the *jelmalandji*. Although the relationship term of *mari* signifying the *kunapipi* is one that normally denotes age (that is, in the grandparents' generation), it is less important from the point of view of sacredness than the *ngu:rlmak*, said to be the major ritual of the trilogy. Sometimes, however, the *ngu:rlmak* is spoken of as "the father of the *kunapipi* side", while the *kunapipi* and *djunggawon* are classified together. But in practice it seems that, irrespective of the terminology of *mari*, the Kunapipi is really of secondary importance. [561] [534] [601]

796 616 All the Wauwalak-Julunggul ceremonies belong to the *dua* clans or linguistic groups, and are under the direction of *dua* moiety totemic headmen; but members of the *jiritja* moiety assist in the dancing, singing, and making of ritual objects, and may even include certain of their own particular dances based on purely *jiritja* myth cycles. *Dua* ceremonial leaders, however, are recognized as the principal custodians of indigenous ritual, for they possess not only the Wauwalak but also the Djanggawul. In contrast to the more conservative *dua* groups, the *jiritja* have incorporated introduced themes[1] into their ritual life.

[113] 1. *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, Secular Figures of North-East Arnhem Land, *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213-222, with plates; Discovery of Pottery in North-Eastern Arnhem Land. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXVII, Part 2; and R. Berndt, Badu, Islands of the Spirits, *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, pp. 93-103; R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land, Its History and Its People*, for publication.

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Wauwalak sheltered, and into which the Julunggul came, the *murlk* symbolizes the uterus of the Mother (the Wauwalak or Djanggawul). Old aborigines say: "You know, when the Julunggul went into the hut, we mean that a penis is entering a woman's vagina, and this hut is a uterus too: that is why we have it on the sacred ground, for it reminds us that everything must come from the Mother's uterus. That is how we came in the Dreaming; and people still continue to come in that way, don't they? And why do we have that Julunggul? Well, don't we have to have a penis to open up and inseminate the woman, so that she can give birth to children? And when the Julunggul swallows the Wauwalak, that is like a penis being swallowed by a vagina, only we put it the other way around. Now, when we hold our big rituals, we do the very same things, because we want the seasons to come, and things to grow, and people to be born: that is the real meaning of what we do".

The Kunapipi rituals have been described in some detail by Dr. Warner (*op. cit.* pp. 290–311), and the reader is referred to this for comparisons. We will mention only various features found in the Yirrkalla region, indicating their relation to the Wauwalak mythology, and interpreting (from native explanations) the actions of the neophytes. It is beyond the scope of this work to record minute details of each stage of the ceremony, for this would entail description of dancing and many irrelevant actions, individual interpretations, and the whole interaction of men and women in and away from the sacred ground. Some of the Kunapipi songs, used both on the sacred ground and in the main camp, are given in Chapters VII and VIII, and these reveal certain details not treated here.

* * * *

The Kunapipi is held usually in the dry season, when food is plentiful; for during this ceremony people are reaping the benefits of performances held in the previous year, and at the same time are preparing for the coming wet season and the subsequent growth of food. Ceremonies may extend over a period of two weeks to two months, and in unusual cases as long as two years. But now, when the Mission frowns on the Kunapipi and its attendant rituals, it may be brought to a close after a few days with the result that much of the intricate symbolism is omitted. The principal Kunapipi leader is usually a man of the Li:alauwermiri or an affiliated linguistic group, or one whose totemic *rangga*, *marelin* objects, or song cycle are associated with Muruwul sacred well and the Wauwalak. In the Yirrkalla region the Kunapipi leaders may have come from Rose River, being members of groups which are in other respects culturally alien, or from *dua* clans near Rose River who have obtained the Kunapipi from further south.

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of the ground, but is careful not to look over towards his wife. 796
Both of these variations are known at Yirrkalla, but are recog- 786
nized as taking place outside their own Kunapipi area.
A man or woman will rarely refuse the ritual Kunapipi obligations 837
of having coitus, or giving and receiving presents. Their frank attitude towards the question of sexual relations, and their understanding of the importance of such ritualized copulation, predetermines their full acceptance. Moreover, there is an obvious content of enjoyment, for both men and women are stimulated by the pre-coitus dancing and interchange of jokes. Should there be refusal, [832] caused perhaps by the dislike of a certain Kunapipi partner, that man or woman is soon obliged to conform, for the thwarted partner will threaten to send Julunggul to the other and so cause sickness. [753]
The initial incestuous relations of the Wauwalak Sisters with [773] clansmen, as we have seen, are cited in explanation of this ceremonial copulation.[15] There is also the deeper intent of fertility: the symbolic spiritual fructification of the Mother. There is a tendency [789] to regard this sexual exchange of wives as providing an element of "danger"; for here are men and women copulating with the wives and husbands of others, virtually under their eyes and with one another's full (that is, in theory) sanction, and in "older times" with [835] tabu-ed relatives. All is made possible on the sacred ground, under the "divine" sanction of the great Ancestral Beings and the Mother. The inclusion of ceremonial copulation in the Kunapipi is said to "raise its status to that of *mari* (mother's mother's brother, of the older generation)", but not to the high position retained by the *ngu:rlmak*, or the *dua* and *jiritja nara* Djanggawul and Laintjung rituals.

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On the morning following the ritual intercourse, the final group of 796
Kunapipi ceremonies is performed.
Just before dawn, all the *dua* men assemble at one end of the sacred 881
ground, and the *jiritja* men at the other. The women have returned 778
to the main camp, and the young initiates are sitting with their guardians. All the men are painted with white paint, spraying it over [302] one another from their mouths; and most have spears. They begin to clap their spears, one against the other, and dance towards each other, changing sides. The bullroarers begin to twirl at this juncture, and the women answer their sound from the main camp. The men's [535] dancing continues till sunrise, when the two moiety groups dance down to the boundary between the ceremonial ground and the main [616] camp, taking the young boys with them. Here, to the accompaniment of the bullroarers' sound and ritual calling, they erect the

15. *Vide* L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 307–8, who also provides a native interpretation of this aspect.

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The following Table summarizes these aspects.

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TABLE

		Materialistic Aspect of Yirrkalla Religion	Spiritual Aspect of Yirrkalla Religion
Fundamental Aspects		Nature; Seasons; Vegetable and animal growth; reproductive faculties of man; survival of the group; basic drives (for example, food and sex)	
Repositories of Divine Power		Djanggawul; the Wauwalak. (Concept of Fertility Mother and Penis Snake): alone capable of releasing the power which brings about continuation	Unquestioning faith
Expressions and Instruments	Mythology	Djanggawul and Wauwalak Cycles (explaining the power of the "Divine" Beings)	Ideology, Religious philosophy and meditation
	Ritual	Sacred ritual and ceremony (of which the Kunapipi is merely one aspect). An instrument by which the "divine" power is released	Absorption in ritual as a "divine" purpose (spiritual edification)
Achievement		Production of necessities for physical continuance and survival. (Maintenance of *status quo*)	Spiritual growth. (Laws and ideals based on the behaviour of the "divine" Beings)

Here we observe the belief that ritual, as an expression of the sacred mythology, releases the "power" vested in the Divine Ancestral Beings for the ultimate welfare of the tribal group. This is primarily a materialistic aim, for its specific intent is the production of necessities for the physical continuation and survival of the people, the bringing into force of an elaborate mechanism that expresses man's innate selfishness and egocentricity. But as an adjunct to this thesis, Yirrkalla religion has an underlying non-materialistic thread, that is an expression of spiritual growth. Based as it is on an unquestioning acceptance of the religious doctrine, a belief in the omnipo-

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773 tence and immutability of the "eternal" Beings, a religious philos-
796 ophy has been developed among the mature "thinkers" of the group.
This finds its outlet in the mental exercise of meditation, interpre-
789 tation, and explanation, but is nevertheless restricted by the deep
794 faith that is a living part of all its manifestations. Within the limita-
tion of defined premises, a certain degree of flexibility is apparent;
philosophic concepts have not remained static, nor ideology stag-
nant. Throughout the centuries of religious development, alien ideas
[177] have been considered and discussed, even when they were unortho-
dox, and apparently opposed to indigenous theology. They have been
accepted or discarded; but all have, in this way, served to illuminate
and extend the basic principles which serve to explain to the abori-
gines man's place in his environment, and his inter-relationship with
the "Divine" Beings who are possessed of the power of animation
and are the seat of knowledge.

796 Several interesting points are raised in our description of Kunapipi
ritual.

In all Kunapipi ceremonies, throughout the whole region men-
tioned in Chapter II, basic words referring to the sacred objects,
ceremonies, and so on, are very much the same; for instance,
[184] *nanggaru*, *kanala*, *jelmalandji*, *djamala*, *gumagu*, and *djepalmandji*.
These terms serve as a connecting link, for their meanings do not
change drastically from one area to another, even when, as at Yirr-
kalla, the Kunapipi ritual itself has been superimposed on a rela-
tively indigenous theme. The dominating theory behind the Kunapipi
has preserved, more or less intact, its original intent.

562 Another outstanding aspect is the important rôle undertaken by
796 women throughout the performance of the Kunapipi ceremonies.
At no time do they feel themselves secluded from purely male
activity, while at intervals they take an active part. They know that
the rituals are principally concerned with peculiarly feminine func-
tions, and that men are carrying out the more strenuous features of
ceremonial life. "These rituals," said one informant, "are just like a
man copulating with a woman, he does all the hard working so that
the woman can carry out the really important business of child-
birth." This may be a one-sided attitude, but it does adequately
express local native reasoning in this matter. The question of
whether women are profane, as opposed to the aura of sacredness
pervading a male participant at such a ceremony, does not enter into
Yirrkalla thinking. Even when ritually tabu because of afterbirth or
[241] menstruation blood (as in the case of the Wauwalak at the sacred
Muruwul billabong), a woman is regarded as sacred, for her blood
and her other activities themselves are sacred, and are focal points
in the religious doctrine. And all sacred ceremony, these aborigines
[773] say, was inspired by women. "In the beginning men had nothing, and
women possessed all the ritual; so men stole this from the women
... "—(Djanggawul and Wauwalak mythology).

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159 the *nanggaru*; some went into the *nanggaru*, and others went on and
787 into the *kanala*. All the men with the young initiates called out, when
796 they paused now and then on their way to the *kanala* and *nanggaru*;
881 and they all made a big noise while standing there.

"Then the men danced around the *kanala* and *nanggaru*, but did not go into them. They danced the 'Lightning whipping (that is, striking) the tree', which we call the *djamala*; but it is also called by the sacred terms *djeimbalma*, *gurungandungandu*, *w'raidji'kaijunduna*, *kokarara*, and *kanggarara*, which mean the flash of lightning striking and splitting the tree. While we danced, the *dua* men swung the bullroarers, which we call *maralpan(dji)*, *pundjarlari* and *kindji:lari*, while its human hair string attachment (the tail of the Snake) is *jurawa*, *mikara*, *libana* or *djuruwalimbana*. The bullroarer is like the Snake [749] himself calling, for when you swing it, twirling it from the stick to which the cord is attached, you send lightning all over the place.

"Then we called and sang the sacred names of the *kanala*: [539] '*kanala ; kanala'indja ; ju:tubilmani : kanu:lanawalkwalkgwina; Kanala'buldjalwondinja ; kanala'djeijil'malindjei ; kanala'madpaindi:nja; kanala'buramanbir*' (e.g. see Chapter VII, Song 3).

"We turned to the *nanggaru*, the Snake's hole, to the place where Djuwalji was standing (at *e*), which was the mark made by the Snake when it came out of the *nanggaru*. And we called and sang the sacred names of the *nanggaru*: '*nanggaru ; wuninbilibaija ; wa:ngnanggu ; baiala; djalpunbu; wandi:ku; buldjalwondi; winibini:nbailji ; buldjalwondinja*—the nest in which the Snake lies.'

"We turned to the two *jelmalandji*, the Snake towering over the place where the initiates had been lying, and the "cabbage" palm at *g*. And we called and sang their sacred names:

[539] "'*kanggara ; dju:randju:ran'kanggara ; gumanangaleija'angaleija ; gumanangali:tjbili:tjbi ; gumana'wu:rulndja'wu:rulndja ; ru:kari ; windigwi:agwi:a'windigwi:agwi:a ; djalparu'ru:karwa ; bu:ra:rwa ; wuraldja ; gumalanga'ngeidjangeidja ; gumanang'ngali'djili:djli ; windigwi:agwi:a'djanggara.*' (This last word is chanted when the Kunapipi headman beats his sticks as the *jelmalandji* are pushed over.) And we pushed down the *jelmalandji*, so that the *watamunu*, [616] the emu-feathered tops, fell off. The main *jelmalandji* (*h*) was for the *dua* linguistic groups of Marakulu and Ri:radjingu; while the other (*g*) was for the Murungun, Djapu and Djarwak, *dua* groups.

"As the bullroarer was swung, its string broke, and the loose piece of wood flew over and hit a *durilji* gum tree: the impact was so powerful that the tree split, and pieces fell to each side. Then we walked over to pick up the bullroarer, and as I bent down I awoke."

[828] Gumuk said that anger was the cause of this dream: he had cooked some rice for his supper, leaving it on the fire. When he came back for it, it was gone; someone had stolen it. He was "a bit sorry for himself, because he had been cooking just for nothing". He went to

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right down. The girl's legs are tied to the posts, so that her legs are outstretched between them. (We know of no other reference to the actual tying down of the Kunapipi girl who has been chosen for ceremonial coitus. As a young girl is specified, this probably refers to ritual defloration which has been mentioned briefly elsewhere—*vide* Chapters IV, V and X. It suggests also that force is used to hold the girl, a feature which should not normally accompany this rite; moreover, promiscuity is such a feature of this area, with the breaking down of indigenous regulations governing sexual conduct, that one would not expect it to be necessary.)

The men then paint themselves, and line up for dancing. There may be two or three hundred men on the sacred ground. The headman begins to beat his clapping sticks, while the dancing men clap their hands rhythmically to the music and song, and call out intermittently. Then the first man, at the head of the long line of dancing men, leaves the line and goes into the shade and copulates with the Kunapipi girl; the other men continue clapping their hands and calling out.

Under the girl, immediately beneath her vulva, a small depression has been dug and in it has been placed a shallow paperbark dish; this catches the semen and vaginal juices that come out of the girl.

When the first man has left the hut, another takes his place; this is continued until all the men in the line have entered the hut and copulated, and their semen has flowed from the girl into the paperbark container.

By this time, the container is full; and after a rest, the men remove it from the hut and begin to paint themselves with the semen; then they continue their dancing, which goes on from early morning until sunset. Ceremonial coitus takes place each day for several weeks, different girls being chosen for each ceremony." Other rituals relating to the Kunapipi are also performed in a sequence similar to that already discussed.

It should be mentioned that the reason given for thus decorating the postulants' bodies with designs in semen and vaginal juices is the belief in the fructifying potency of the former. The act of ceremonial coitus is itself symbolic of fertilization, and the subsequent increase of human and the natural species; semen is the essence which causes pregnancy; and this natural and logical belief is an integral part of the rituals of the Kunapipi fertility cult.

There is also an association between semen and the saliva of the Julunggul Snake (*vide* Chapter III, *et seq.*); it was with this substance that Julunggul smeared the Wauwalak and the child prior to swallowing. This "saliva" is represented by white pipe-clay in parts of the Kunapipi, and it is with this that Kunapipi neophytes are painted.

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761] to be named as a scapegoat by the *marngitmirri* of a neighbouring group when one of its members has died, and to be killed by an avenger who has been presented with a spear, to which is attached a bone, usually a metacarpal bone, taken from the finger of the deceased. One or more of these metacarpal bones are removed after the body has been disinterred. They are cleaned and decorated with the orange-red feathers of the red-collared lorikeet (*Trichoglossus rubritorques*), *lindiritj*. One of these *maidjaballa*, as they are called, is attached by a short string to the head of the spear and becomes an avenger's pennant. When a man is presented with a spear to which the *maidjaballa* is attached in this way, he is charged with the responsibility of killing the scapegoat. This is usually done by catching the victim off guard and spearing him. Sometimes this man may defer the action for a long enough time for the injured sentiments of the group to be appeased, when a potential blood feud may be averted by an expiatory payment or by a formal ordeal by spear.

[768
628] [761] In the practice of his cult the *kalka* is believed by the people of the east to waylay his victim in the bush when he is hunting or to invite him to go on a kangaroo hunt. Sometimes the *kalka* may induce his victim to accompany him by claiming to have already killed and cached a kangaroo—which was too heavy for him to carry back to camp alone.

Once he has succeeded in getting the victim away from his friends, the *kalka* has little difficulty in catching him off guard and overcoming him. Generally he will have made a rendezvous with other *kalka* in the bush. These men overpower their victim by knocking him down, then they open his mouth and pull down his lower lip to expose the alveolar border into which they insert the *kandjurma*—made from a long thin piece of ironwood called *maipin*, or from the long bones of a flying fox or the fibula of a kangaroo, sharpened to a fine point. Informants overlooked the fact that in this approach the *kandjurma* would strike the bone of the mandible or lower jaw. To the distal end of this *kandjurma* is attached a rope of human hair which is placed in a shallow trough of tea-tree bark called *tannia* in which the blood drained from the heart is said to be collected. The *kalka*, now aided by his confederates, has rendered his victim unconscious or comatose. As the *kandjurma* is inserted into the heart, which is approached by way of the dorsal aorta, the victim is said to emit a series of deep husky rasping intakes of breath. Each time this occurs the *kalka* pauses, but as soon as it ceases he thrusts the long, sharply pointed *kandjurma* a little farther down the great vessel towards the heart (*tortork*).[4]

The *kandjurma* is guided and shielded by the left hand of the *kalka* as he uses his right hand to thrust the point down to reach the heart.

Meanwhile one of the *kalka* places the *tannia* close to the victim. He now holds the man's head while the blood runs into it; the *kalka* then grasps his victim around the waist and squeezes his body so that all the blood is drained from it, after which he removes the *tannia* and hides it.

[224
784] The blood collected is made into small parcels wrapped in paper bark and either used in ritual cannibalism or rubbed

754
224 on the eyes, cheeks and arm of a hunter to make him alert
789 and far-seeing—*mel karrkuluk*—and so to aid him in sighting and approaching game that is difficult to kill, 554 success with which brings prestige to a hunter. The blood drawn by a *ragalk* from his victim, or the flesh taken from 778 the body of a man whose death has been brought about by a sorcerer, has special potency in magic. It is regarded as dangerous, *duya*—tabu in a ritual sense by virtue of its *marr*—*marr dal* (*marr*, spiritual power, *dal*, strong). It must therefore be eaten only with due observance of ritual precautions. In the case of a young man or uninitiated boy, human flesh, particularly flesh from the victim of a *kalka*, may be given to him only by an old man who first applies 789 his own axillary sweat to the mouth, face and throat of 784 the novice so that he will not become sick, and thus ensures that he receives the benefit of the *marr* without the danger that he would otherwise incur. On no account may a boy or a young man touch this flesh or blood with his own hands.

774 Meanwhile the victim of the *kalka* lies unconscious and
754 is declared by the natives to be dead. They say that his *malli*—his ghost—remains with the body, but that his *birimbir* departs. The *birimbir* is very near to our idea of the soul. It resides originally with the *malli ranga*, the spirit or spirit-manifestation of the totem which remains always in the *wangarr kapu manotji*, the totemic well or water hole where it swam until it entered the mother's body at conception. When the *birimbir* leaves the body of the victim of the *kalka*, my informants said that it returned to the *kapu manotji*. And they added: 'All same he die.' It is as if the man has died. For when a man dies his *birimbir* returns as described above, to the *kapu manotji* from which it came and swims there until it is again reincarnated.

754 The *kalka* now proceeds to restore his victim to life.
278 He takes a white stone from his dilly bag. First he rubs on
824 the body the mucilage of an orchid called *djalkurk*, *Dendrobium dicuphum*, and then warms the stone, which he places on the sore—*tji'tji*—or on the victim's chest. He warms the stone again and now places it on the *maiyang* (throat) and chest. Then he draws the skin back into place, heats the stone again and places it on his victim's cheeks, supplementing the stone with the blade of his *mangal*—spear-thrower. My informants said that the penis of the victim is erect, the tongue hanging out and the bowel prolapsed, and each of these organs has to be treated and replaced in position. Sometimes one of the *kalka* will climb a nearby tree and break down the leafy nest of a green tree ant (*Œcophylla virescens*)—which exudes a strong, pungent odour of formic acid and is believed by the natives to have some therapeutic value. The *kalka* scatters these ants over the prolapsed intestine, which my informant declared to be effective in causing it to retract.

754 It was a matter of surprise to me to find a number of men who were in possession of the *kandjurma*, which are the stock-in-trade of the *ragalk*, admitted to membership of the cult, and were even willing to demonstrate to me their technique in dealing with a victim.

The natives do not pretend that a man subjected to treatment by *kalka* in the manner described is afterwards

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6|9 they also possess rituals and myths in common, and in many
6|4 cases, obvious dialects of one language.

Each of these groups is a patrilineal clan, the members (apart from the wives of the men), being all related in the male line; a social group consists of a man and his brothers and sisters, his children, his son's children, his brother's children and such like. Members of such a clan must never [582] marry one another, but only members of other clans, according to the kinship rules. This rule is called local exogamy. The members of the local clan, together with [621] [591] their wives who have come to live with them (as is the custom), are called a horde.

779 The most important feature of the local clan is the link
775 which binds its members to one or more sacred totemic
614 waterholes (or wells) in the clan country. The well was
[718] formed by the cult totemic hero and ancestor of the clan. In it have sojourned from the great ancestral time the spirits of all those whose earthly course is run, that is, the souls of the dead. Also associated with the well are the clan's totemic emblems and ceremonies. One important function of the latter is the maintenance of the regular order [789] of the dry and wet seasons, and the link with the creative epoch of the totem. Incidentally the souls of the dead may take up their abode, not only in the well, but also in the totemic emblems, and are believed to be present at the great totemic ceremonies. In addition they are called upon to do their part in some rites, especially in connexion with burial. [764] For example, in Chapter 14, Mr Chaseling refers to a deceased child's grandfather chanting a prayer to his own dead brother (that is, the child's 'tribal' grandfather), to come and take the child back to Buralkor, the Island of the Dead. But though a deceased person's spirit goes to this island, it re- [718] turns to the totemic well in his clan's country. This may seem contradictory to us, but just as space and time were no obstacle to the great ancestresses who came from the island,

754 food in fire made from a certain shrub; as the heat increases his throat swells till he dies. The trouble can be cured only
[755] by finding the fire and pouring water on it. If a spear or spear-thrower is broken and burnt, the owner's hands become crippled and twisted by rheumatism. A saccule or bark drinking-cup also provides means for injuring the one who drank from it, for if a pronged fish-spear is stabbed into it the victim's throat swells till he dies. Maleirpa the leper had lost most of his fingers and toes long before his misfortune was attributed to magic, but someone idly recalled that, years previously, Bulambi had followed Maleirpa's footprints along a beach and had aimlessly dropped the point of his pronged fish-spear into them. Obviously Maleirpa's toes had dropped off in consequence. As the victim did not die immediately, Bulambi was not
[683] killed, but when the afflicted one finally succumbs, Bulambi will need to make restitution to his next-of-kin by the gift of a canoe, an axe, or spears. Meanwhile Bulambi, the leper, and his brothers fraternize and hunt happily together.

●789 'Nyirrah' is specialized magic connected with the making
787 of wind and rain, the poisoning of food before it is eaten, and the controlling of a woman's desires so that she can be made to desert her husband and follow the man of Nyirrah. Such magic comes to a man in a dream, by instruction from another Yulengor or by direct bestowal from the Nyirrah spirit-centre. When the body is asleep human spirits are free
[774] to roam and converse, and then a spirit with Nyirrah powers may invite another to see him kill a man or make rain. A
[778] more direct method is to go inland to a mythical tree from which Nyirrah powers are dispensed. Approaching the tree the man hears the beating of clap-sticks, and their very invisibility proves that spirits inhabit the tree. If he is brave enough to go nearer Nyirrah will automatically come upon him.

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Our pedal-radio had broken down, and Mau and four other men took an urgent message for me to Milingimbi, a hundred and fifty miles away. It seemed that whilst he was there he was seduced by a married woman who came to his camp at night and told him to prepare the canoe whilst she collected the paddles. They made their get-away with no one the wiser, but next morning footprints and the missing canoe told the story. Two months later Mau and the woman came ashore at Yirrkala, and in the subsequent disputes and negotiations by the husband to regain his wife, Mau's horde stood firm, and Mau kept the woman. I was told that I had misinterpreted the incident, and that the woman had no active part in the elopement, for Mau had cast a Nyirrah spell over her, and her apparent enticement had all the time been inspired and controlled by him.

All rain is attributed to human agency, and heavy storms are invariably claimed by some wily magician. Distant clouds often lead to the casual remark that a horde living many miles in that direction is making rain. When I asked why they did not make rain to fall in the dry season, to cool the burning atmosphere and to make the yams grow, I was told that it is never made at that time of the year because they want the grass to die so that they can hunt kangaroos and emus. To my suggestion that regular showers would help the station garden crops, they replied that the garden did not need rain when the irrigation plant was pumping thousands of gallons over it.

Actual rain-making is a simple matter, but it depends entirely on the will and discretion of the magician. By one method, he kills a snake, and leaves it till putrefaction sets in before hanging it in a tree. He takes the spirit of this reptile, sings his instructions to it, and sends it into the sky to make rain. Thunder accompanying the storm is the voice of the growling snake, and lightning flashes are his flickering tongue. Wind preceding the rain is due to the snake rolling

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821 the clouds together and pushing the wind before them in the
825 way that water spreads out before a rolling stone. As he
789 labours the snake weeps copiously and his tears fall as rain.
If a snake is not available for rain-making, a bundle of grass may be tied together and submerged in a waterhole. Instructions are sung to this before its immersion, whereupon
[116] the great Spirit who made the world and at times revealed himself through the mythical serpent, assumes the functions of the missing earthly reptile and sends the rain.

In west Arnhem Land another mythological serpent
[184] sends rain in response to aboriginal wizardry. He shows himself as the rainbow, and thunder is the rumbling of his body as he turns over to urinate in the form of rain. To impress his admirers with his strength, Umbij hits two stones together till they flash fiery lightning.

821 If an old man is offended at some slight in the wet season
789 he will threaten to send a storm. All day Munju had been
888 mumbling and scowling at the door of his shelter, but his temper improved considerably toward sundown as nimbus clouds gathered to the accompaniment of distant thunder. That night a fierce tropical storm swept over the island, trees were struck by lightning, thunder crashed, and the wind howled as it levelled trees and shelters. In the sparkling stillness of the following dawn, the sun rose over a subdued camp, where Munju's honour had been vindicated, and he accepted the homage of his contemporaries. Also in the
[302] stormy wet season I heard a noisy termagant at Yirrkala
[578] objecting to young women cutting their hair, and when they persisted she threatened to call up a storm. That night we had heavy rain and a strong wind, and next day old Bamaja's exploit was referred to in subdued tones. Like most rainmakers she was aged, and having lived in the open air for sixty years with no other shelter than a sheet of bark, she knew her weather and could make a fairly accurate forecast.

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BLACK MAGIC

There are no direct methods for stopping a storm, and it is taken for granted that the rain continues as long as the rain-maker wills it. If fine weather is desired it is necessary to intimidate the rain-maker. During protracted stormy weather I developed acute appendicitis, and as the wireless transmitter had been shattered by lightning, we were unable to get medical assistance till five Yulengor, including Mau, volunteered to make a hazardous open-sea trip to the nearest pedal-wireless station one hundred and fifty miles away. Day after day the storms and high seas continued and the canoe was hardly expected to get through. From the time the boys left till the flying doctor arrived, Jirring, who was particularly attached to me, sat by his camp-fire significantly grinding his axe and muttering threats against the misguided rain-maker who had not only manufactured the storms, but now obstinately allowed them to continue.

Another kind of magic belongs to certain localities and it is necessary to perform certain rites at these magic-centres. An old gnarled tree in the Wessel Islands shelters the spirits of octopuses, and peculiar rock formations near Cotton Island are also octopus-spirit centres. If a nomad wishes to harm another he visits either site and instructs a spirit-octopus to enter the victim's body, in an invisible form, or to change into a fish which the victim will catch and eat to his destruction. Two men from Arnhem Bay were killed in the course of a long feud, so their mother went to an octopus centre and sent a spirit to spoil her enemies. She told the octopus-spirit to travel into enemy territory and there change into a large shell-back turtle, to float near the shore, and to remain inactive till caught and eaten: 'And when they eat you, you kill them,' she said. About that time the unfortunate enemy chanced to harpoon an outsize turtle near Port Bradshaw, and ate all they could, without paying attention to the poison glands. Within a few hours

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754 several women and children were dead; other sufferers were retching, and rolling on the beach in agony.

When an epidemic of whooping cough from Darwin swept eastwards through Arnhem Land and caused many deaths, [164] a horde on the Crocodile Islands explained that an enemy [776] had released the curse from a tree containing the spirit of the common cough. By stripping the bark from the tree he uncovered the evil spirit and sent it to the camps of his enemies to afflict them. On the other hand he could have broken up the tree, burnt it, and sent the smoke to blow over them.

754 Old Manimba, lame and half-blind, was familiar with 753 magical arts and an acknowledged rain-maker. He also ● 789 claimed to have control over mosquitoes and boils. Spirits 885 of both plagues inhabit the pandanus palm, and when these [776] prickly fronds drop off in the wet season the mosquito and boil spirits are released to swarm over the land. Manimba usually gets what he wants by threatening to send some sort of plague. To rouse unseasonal mosquitoes he pulls a green pandanus frond and instructs its mosquito-spirit to swarm into the country of his enemies, and it is done. He can call up boils by making a fire under the palm and directing the smoke to blow over and inflict certain camps.

754 Death in any but the very young or old is attributed to evil 76 magic and the first consideration is to fix the blame, for 787 someone must die for it. When a man is killed his lesser [775] spirit follows the killer. Marrngeit, or benevolent witch-[756] doctors, claim to be able to see these enslaved ghosts, and they are called on for an opinion. They sometimes make startling revelations to the relatives, though not always without serving their own ends. I remember one marrngeit acted on his own initiative, and asked the relatives: 'Do you know why your brother died?' And when interest and suspicion were fully aroused, he continued, 'I have seen his "mali". It is following Jimunboi, and he must

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have killed him.' At other times the marrngeit is called to examine the body and reconstruct the crime, for by his supernatural powers he can see the marks of the alleged wound, and by sleight of hand he pulls it open to prove his case. He can see the ghost of the killer lurking near the victim's body, or if the body has been disposed of he can still name the killer by an examination of the victim's armlet, spear, or footprints. 754 761 787

Birrinjauwoi of Milingimbi died from pleurisy and was buried before a marrngeit could be brought to examine him. His ornaments and personal possessions were therefore put aside for the autopsy, but when a trickle of moisture came from the lips of the corpse it was hailed as the best specimen of all and was taken to the marrngeit. This marrngeit was a wise man and talked to them and asked questions till he felt sure of their feelings, and then dramatically named the 'killer'.

A youth was killed somewhere in the hills behind Blue Mud Bay, and within three days we heard of it from messengers who ran with the news to us at Yirrkala. They called on the relatives to organise a revenge party, and personal possessions from the corpse were shown and small parts of his flesh distributed. In the emotion which flamed through the country, wailing women incited their men to vengeance. I was reminded of the biblical story of an ancient Hebrew tribe which received parts of a body that had been carved up and sent amongst them to cry for vengeance, and they swept over the hills of Palestine to exterminate a related horde. 628 765

Relics from a dead man are known as 'maiyabala', and consist of finger joints, small bones, fragments of the spear embedded in the body, dried blood, skin, flesh, hair, or ornaments. They are given to relatives as reminders of their obligation to exact blood vengeance and by the very acceptance of them the pact is sealed. A victim's lesser spirit 774 789 765

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774 accompanies the maiyabala to assist in locating and
789 killing the murderer. Maiyabala are often carried in the
765 mouth, in totemic dilly-bags, or rolled in bees wax and tied round the neck. They give extra strength and skill to the wearers and guide them to the enemy, who, in turn, is made unwary and tired.

765 Raiwola told me that he had accepted such a maiyabala
628 but for years his vow remained unfulfilled. Then one day after a long kangaroo hunt in the rain he stood warming himself by a fire with several other men, amongst whom chanced to be the killer of his relative. Without a word Raiwola plunged his spear into him, and in reply to the astounded questions of the huntsmen, he produced his maiyabala as proof that it had been done in settlement of the old debt.

726 It is rarely left to one man to avenge a death, for in the
628 heat of emotion that follows a killing the relatives go in a body to exact vengeance. Killing-parties are known as
[201] 'merringor', and their appropriate sign in the sign-language is wiping the open palm down over the face to suggest their ruthlessness in wiping out men, women, and children. In feverish passion, and with maiyabala and totemic dilly-bags slung from their necks, merringor lose all fear and travel relentlessly till they are lean and exhausted. They daub their
[302] bodies with white clay, a practice which plainly indicates their intentions, they creep silently on their enemies, and with wild yells they hurl their spears into the sleeping groups. Such raids are seldom bloodless, and more deaths result from these attacks than from all other forms of violence.

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given to relatives, and by accepting them they pledge themselves to avenge the death of their kinsman. Bones are also worn as hunting-charms; the ghost follows the bone and guides the wearer to good hunting. Skeletons carried in canoes or sheltered in huts transfer their ghost to anything they touch, and rarely are they allowed to come into contact with private property.

Tabus are lifted by switching away the ghost with smoking twigs. This common 'muntja' ceremony is performed whenever news of a death reaches a camp, perhaps months after it has occurred, otherwise the roaming, mischievous ghost might haunt them indefinitely. Men are most particular in taking part in the ghost-laying practices, otherwise the ghost would trail them when hunting, and as animals can see these spirits it would not be possible to stalk and spear game.

An accepted etiquette is observed in breaking news of death. With an air of mystery the messenger imparts his information to two or three of the older men, and often it is ten or twelve hours before they divulge the news in open camp. I saw a man bring such news and tell it by signs to a few old men who agreed to keep the secret till they arranged the ghost-placating ceremony, and no one heard about it till the coterie commenced to sing for the unmistakable 'muntja'. Performers then derived great satisfaction from the furore; the rest of the camp ran to inquire about the death and to join in the laying of the ghost.

Dead nomads' names are never repeated, though reference to them can be made by signs or by relationship terms. If the restless ghost heard its old familiar name it would probably lodge in the camp or in the body of the person using it. A nomad with a dead man's name will change it or be referred to under a class-name. A little girl, Milly-milly, had her euphonious name changed to Arrung-giddy-niddy after the death of an older Milly-milly. The child appreciated

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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372 smoulder. This falls on a handful of dead grass which is held in the wind, or blown on, till it bursts into flame. I have seen the whole operation of fire-making completed in as little as twenty-three seconds, or in scarcely more time than it takes to open a box of matches, select one and strike it.

*773 On their way westward the Junkgowa raised a circular granite dome into which they fused the lesser spirit of the sun. Yulengor beat this sun-totem when the country becomes saturated and impassable in the wet season, and it is said that this causes the water to evaporate.

Away in the west a rising cloud of smoke interested the Junkgowa, and they made their way toward it and came on an old Man sitting by his camp fire. He was startled by the Women; the more so when they spoke to him in his own tongue and asked what he was doing.

His reply was noncommital: 'I sit by myself.'

'Yes, we can see that. Are there no other Men here?'

In a burst of confidence the hermit told them that he was the last of his horde: 'All my brothers are dead. They died from sores leaving white patches on their skin. Whenever they scratched themselves, the skin came off, and then they died.' Daunted neither by his rusticity nor his lugubrious tale, the Women made a wind-break shelter and camped a few yards from his fire. Next night they ventured a little nearer, and on the third night they suggested to him that it would be more sociable if they were all to camp together rather than keep two camp-fires alight. He agreed to the suggestion, and as the dawn was breaking twins were born to each of the Junkgowa. Many children were sent out from this camp to inaugurate new hordes, but first they were trained in arts and crafts, beliefs and magic, and received totems, ceremonial secrets, and Stone Age implements. When the old Man died, the Women experienced again the restless urge to go westward, and they broke camp and

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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*773 779 power of the men's ceremonial singing and dancing, and after the manner of women they were compelled to block their ears, to hide their faces and to run from the place. With unholy glee my informants recounted the rout of the Junkgowa Women, and added that they consoled themselves by saying: 'No matter, let the men keep the totems.' And men have guarded them ever since.

*773 776 Having outstayed their usefulness at Yaure-Yaurngor, the Ancestresses were relieved to hear the beating of distant clap-sticks, and traced them to Elcho Island. They came to the western end of Cadell Strait, and seeing plenty of fish they tried to catch them, but only succeeded in injuring their hands. Until this time their hands were webbed and without fingers, but as they chased the fish and repeatedly struck their hands on the rocks the skin was broken and fingers were formed.

*773 779 [778] Elcho Island is an important totem centre in Arnhem Land, where self-created totems were in existence before the Junkgowa arrived. One of the peculiarly shaped totem-rocks embodies the mali of the 'shout' in the great Ngara ceremony. Others contain the mali of yam sticks, crabs, and palm mats. As these totems were being evolved they were attacked by swarms of sandflies and forced to retreat along the beach, till finally they wriggled into the sand for protection, and now only small parts of them project above the surface.

The Ancestresses made a long sand-bar totem, that they might cross to the island and endow it with the mali of their [778] clap-sticks. On a nearby reef they dropped two large rocks to enshrine their own lesser-spirits. Another sun-totem was [789 782] made on the beach, and like the one near Arnhem Bay it is beaten after heavy rain. In support of the custom, one of my guides remarked: 'Yes, Ngulprei's mother beat it last wet season to make the ground dry so she could go for yams *773 at the other end of the island.' By the side of the sun-totem

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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Magic profoundly influences everyday beliefs and habits, and an ordinary nomad, as well as the witch-doctor, may set in operation magical powers.[1]

Prayer is offered to the spirits of the dead, and they are not only called on to receive departing human spirits, but in time of sickness, a man will call on the waterspout to carry his prayer to the spirits of his relatives.[2] A patient may also enter a totemic waterhole inhabited by a great mythical snake, which will effect the faith-cure.[3] Mythical serpents are called on for help, and receive prayers in time of acute danger and distress.

Makarola told me that he had been overtaken by darkness when returning with his family after a day's fishing. A strong wind arose and the canoe was blown out to sea, waves half-filled it, and whilst wives and children baled frantically in the darkness, he toiled to keep the dug-out into the wind. Makarola then remembered his totem and called on it for help. He said that in that instant he saw a 'bright light' which 'filled' his head. By the light he was assured that they would be brought safely to land, and when the wind abated, the family landed in an exhausted condition.

Though awe and fear weigh heavily in aboriginal religion, the nomad's religious outlook and practices are best summed up under the term 'Totemism'. Such totemism links man and nature and goes back to the ancestral creators of Junkgowa, who made the earth and its inhabitants, instituted present-day laws, habits and customs, and defined for all time the nomad's outlook and beliefs. Totemic beliefs and the record of their bestowal are preserved in the Ngara ceremonies, which are linked with the totem centres where the hero-Ancestors performed their mighty deeds. Behind the supernatural Ancestors, and beyond the present world, is the spirit-land of Buralkor, from whence they came.

[1] Chapter 13, 'Black Magic.'
[2] Chapter 10, 'Medicine-Men and Magic.'
[3] *Ibid.*